

THIS NUMBER CONTAINS

# RAY'S RECRUIT.

By CAPTAIN CHARLES KING, U.S.A.,

Author of "The Colonel's Daughter," "The Deserter," "From the Ranks," "A Soldier's Secret," "Sergeant Cæsus," "Captain Close," "A Tame Surrender," etc.

**COMPLETE.**

APRIL, 1897

## LIPPINCOTT'S

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AUTHOR OF "THE COLONEL'S DAUGHTER," "THE DESERTER," "FROM THE  
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CLOSE," "A TAME SURRENDER," ETC.

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# LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

APRIL, 1897.

## RAY'S RECRUIT.

PRELIMINARY.

*To Mr. Darcy Hunter Gray.*

"MY DEAR BOY,—As foreshadowed in my last, the concern has gone to smash, and your prospects with it. When its affairs are settled, the firm of Hunter, Bloom & Co. will have enough to pay its funeral expenses, and that's about all. What I have left is my wife's, who will, I trust, be able to support me until certain life-insurance policies become due, out of which she can reimburse herself, through my dying, for the cost of my living. I'm too old to try again,—too sad to care much, except for you.

"Your father was my dear friend, your mother my beloved sister. When he died I promised him I would be a father to you. When she died her last words were a plea that I should be good to her boy. I accepted both trusts, Darcy, and—betrayed both.

"They died poor: I was rich. They would have had you learn to carve your own career, and I loved you so that from your bright, brave boyhood you were spoiled and indulged as my own son. I gave you the best I had. I balked you in only one desire, that of going to West Point. Harvard, London, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Rome, and the Riviera were your educators. I planned to make you a railway magnate, when you hadn't learned the first principles of the business. I've accustomed you to every luxury,—to a life of careless ease, to be a dawdler and a dilettante—isn't that what you call it? I counted on leaving you rich, and I leave you ruined. The self-reproach—the misery which overcomes me as I write these words, no words can tell you.

"I know what you would write and say,—you were always generous; but, Darcy, don't write, don't come,—just yet. Wait until you get—the next news. Wait until—

"However, let us get down to business. Of course you and

Mrs. Hunter will not be apt to see much of each other. She will mourn me less than you; and you more than I deserve. The very little nest-egg your mother set aside for you is intact. With accrued interest it amounts to some eleven thousand seven hundred and twenty dollars. You have no debts to speak of, have you? I've paid all you ever told me about, twice, I think, and you were always frank and truthful. That little sum, with what you have to your credit in the Chemical and over there with you, represents the sum total of your fortune. You never needed it before, and so I never happened to mention it to you.

"But despite your defects in bringing up, for which I am responsible, you're not much worse off than if you'd gone into the army (I hope you've outlived that lunacy, as you did the other one for—you know), and can now make a strike for yourself. You have the best of health, the best of looks (for you strongly resemble your uncle as he was at your age), the best of education for any purpose that isn't absolutely useful, and there is nothing that I know of to prevent your marrying a fortune as I did, and living happy ever after—as I didn't.

"Don't underrate the extent of my collapse—Bloom got away with what Wall Street left—or of my love. Thank God I have no son of my own. Thank God I've only you to kneel to and say, Forgive the blind, miscalculating, but utterly humbled old fellow that——"

But here the eyes of the man seated there by the dancing waters in the glad April sunshine grew so blind with tears that he could read no more.

Out on the blue, translucent waves the white swans were paddling to and fro, dipping for bread tossed by the lavish hands of laughing children and their white-capped *bonnes*. The flashing oars of many a skiff drove through the sparkling waters, sending snowy little surges breaking from the sharp, white prows. Fairy yachts and swift paddle-wheel steamers clove the mirror surface farther from the shore, and tossed the creamy foam along their billowing wake. Half-way over to the Savoy shore, deep in the shadow of the mountains, two white-winged barques seemed wooing the faltering breeze, for not a leaf was stirring in the deep green foliage that shaded the path along the sea wall. Towering high aloft, dazzling in the sunshine, the snow-seamed, snow-capped crags blinded the eye with their radiance as they peered down into their own reflections in the sombre depths at their shadowy base. Away to the eastward, lovely little towns and villages lay at the foot of the vine-clad slopes of the northern shore, while here and there a venerable ruin—castle, convent, or fortress—stood sentinelled in bold relief on some projecting height, or nestled under the shoulder of some rocky cliff, close to the water's edge. Near at hand, in the public Place, the *carrousels*, thronged with children, old and young, were spinning madly to the reedy melodies of some donkey-driven organ. Waltz, galop, and military march rioted in loud rivalry, and a group of Italian singers, smiling indomitably, carolled "Funiculi Funicula" in nimble opposition to a Tyrolean band quacking like noisy ducks in the pavilion at the water's edge. The bell buttoned page of the Beau Rivage was still darting about, distributing letters just

brought in by the grinning *facteur*, ever a-scent for tips, and, having still three or four undelivered missives, halted in front of the American.

"Pardon, m'sieu', but—ees Mees Langdon——"

"Up at the billiard-rooms, probably," was the brusque answer, as Mr. Gray turned hastily away to hide the suspicious moisture in his eyes.

"But no. I 'ave been there. I 'ave letters for her, and for M'sieu' Sm—eet."

The gloom in the tall American's face deepened perceptibly.

"Over yonder, possibly," he answered, with a sidewise nod of the head towards a little arbor "far from the madding crowd" at the eastward edge of the pretty grounds; then turned away, impatient of further inquiry. Some men were chatting eagerly at the fountain as he passed. One of them, English unmistakably, hailed him jovially.

"Time you were ready, Gray. You're going to Chillon, of course." And, with a true Briton's deep disdain of foreign names, he spoke it as it was spelled.

"No," was the answer; "I'm going to cool off."

"Been getting a red-hot letter, as you Yankees say, I suppose," the Islander went on, impervious to satire.

"That's about the size of it," answered Gray, without halting. Two of the men looked after him with no little concern in their eyes. Others hailed him as he passed them by. Gray was evidently popular. A woman, in billowing laces and a parasol chair, smiled largely upon him as he raised his straw hat, and bade him pause, but prevailed not. Two younger women, in trim walking attire, nodded coquettishly and said it was the very day for the trip; them, too, he answered only vaguely, and, with a far-away look in his deep blue eyes, he passed on to the telegraph office, and the group of smoking men broke up.

"Something's amiss with Gray," said one of the party, a New-Yorker. "I'll go see."

"I don't see what there was in the size of the letter to upset him," said the Englishman, unconscious of slang that was not Britannia ware. "Gray's a good sort, though. Could a fellow do anything, d' you suppose?"

But the pursuer was slow. Seeing him coming, and divining his object, Mr. Gray slipped out of the side door, dived through the shrubbery that bordered a winding drive-way to the west, and took himself off through the crowded Place. He had need to be alone,—to face his changed fortunes fair and square.

Twenty-five years old, and up to the midweek mail from America he had never known a care since boyish days, unless it was some momentary heart-pang when Amy Langdon proved unkind. In a dawdling, amateurish way he had read the daily papers and signed some letters and reports laid before him by an attentive clerk in the office of the Eastern traffic manager of a great road of which his uncle was a heavy stockholder and prominent director. The most serious thing he had ever undertaken was his membership in a crack city



regiment, wherein he had served through the ranks and really earned a commission. But both these avocations he had quitted during the previous winter, and all because Amy Langdon was reported flirting dangerously at Nice and Mentone, and if she were not actually engaged to Darcy Gray he at least felt so far engaged to her that flirtation was denied him.

As pretty a girl as ever rode in Central Park was Amy, and as dashing a horsewoman, and it was Gray's admirable riding and universally acknowledged prospects that made him for the time so acceptable a *parti*. He could manage a horse far better than he could a woman, however, and Miss Langdon kept him at her side when in saddle and subject to call at all other times. But she had, not unkindly, laughed off his protestations and dissected his offers. "It's absurd, Darcy. You haven't a cent in the world that doesn't come from your uncle, and who knows what his wife will do with his fortune,—or he himself, for that matter? As for me, I'm a beggar with social aspirations. Come, be sensible, and I'll like you better. Be a soldier, Darcy, and face the facts. That's the one thing you're cut out for."

"You're hard-hearted, Amy," he had answered.

"No; only hard-headed. I'm soft-hearted enough to like you too well to spoil both our lives."

Gray believed himself much in love when she went abroad in November, and took it much to heart that she should be so constantly attended by Fred Smythe, who had no atom of sense in his head, but no end of dollars in his pocket. But when a lordling—a younger son of an older house than ever dwelt in Gotham—an Honorable, between whom and the title and estates was a lord with only one lung and that fast going—had opposed his sighs to those of Smythe, and there came rumors that Locksley Hall was to be enacted over again with an American Amy in the foreground, Darcy Gray believed it time to rush for the Riviera, and a worried old uncle most unwillingly let him go. Hunter loved that boy, his sister's son, as the apple of his eye. There wasn't anything he wouldn't have given him but the means of earning his own living. All *that* he proposed to settle magnificently. But the bottom began to drop out of the market in mid-January, and left him stranded high and dry by the middle of May. Two million dollars, said Wall Street, had "gone where the woodbine twineth."

Over beyond the hurly-burly of the public Place, crowded with townfolk and children, the road-way wound along the water's edge. Gray strode rapidly westward, his head bowed, his hands thrust deep in his trousers-pockets. He missed his usual companions, a heavy stick and a nimble fox-terrier, but both had been left with the *portier* as inappropriate to a voyage to Chillon. They were to have started, a merry party it promised to be, by the early boat from Geneva, and he could see her now cleaving the limpid waters around the headland of Morges. It was time to warn his companions that he could not go. One girl, at least, might miss him, and she should be accorded opportunity to name some other escort, Amy,—“Amy, shallow-hearted.” She had disappeared with that brainless ass half an hour ago, possibly

to console him for the fact that he was not one of the dozen bidden by Madame la Comtesse to be of the party to voyage with her to the famous castle, breakfast with her aboard *La France*, and dine *en fête* at Montreux. Vane, the Briton, was one, and small comfort did he afford Smythe by bidding him jolly up, and perhaps Madame would let him in for post-prandial coffee at Montroo.

Gray had never been able to stomach Smythe; he called him an insupportable cad; but when, at a turn in the path, he came suddenly upon the combination of brainless ass and insupportable cad squatted on a stone, elbows on knees, his fuzzy jowls deep sunken in his hands, his eyes on the far-away line of the Savoy shore, the intruder relented. Here was woe perhaps as deep as his own.

But in this case misery loved not company, and Smythe was surly. No; there wasn't anything Gray could do for him, thanks. He was feeling seedy, that was all. It was plain to see that the interview with Miss Langdon had left him sore at heart. Gray stood another moment, irresolute. There was absolutely no reason why he should do the fellow a good turn. Smythe hated him and plainly showed it. But Gray had ignored his spleen, and ever good-humoredly tolerated him. It is easy for a man to forgive another's jealousy. But Gray had suffered too much from Miss Langdon's caprice not to know the symptoms when so patent as they were in Smythe. Ill fortune makes some natures magnanimous,—rare natures,—and Gray turned again.

"Look here, old man" ("old chap" had not then come into vogue), "if I can't do anything for you, you can for me. I was to have gone with that party, you know, to Chillon this morning. Yonder comes the boat now. Go to Madame for me, like a good fellow, and tell her I've just received ill tidings from home. I've got to go to Geneva by the ten o'clock train. I was paired off with Miss Langdon. Tell Madame I'm awfully sorry, but I can't go. She'll ask you in my place—see if she doesn't. So long."

And in another minute he was breasting the heights to Lausanne, while Smythe was speeding to Beau Rivage.

It was late that evening when he returned from a solemn day with the bankers, the consul, and certain tradesfolk whose prospects, temporal and eternal, he was given to understand were shattered by his cancellation of certain orders for furs and bijouterie. Heavy levy was made on his check-book to solace their suffering, but there is a certain recklessness of cost when one's financial tether is nearly at an end. Dinner was over at Beau Rivage. The band was playing delightfully in the south portico. Men in evening dress were sauntering and smoking and sipping coffee about the corridor. A few American and English girls with their escorts were dancing in the salon. Gray was still in "knickers," and had dined *solus* at the Hotel Terminus. He paused at the portico and gazed in at the scene of mirth, luxury, and enjoyment wherein he had been so thoroughly at home, and contrasted unflinchingly the scene with that which he had planned for his future. Now it was necessary for him to get to his room to write, and he hoped to reach it unobserved, but the Honorable Rokeby had received his instructions and nabbed him.

"Eoh, I say, Gray—Miss Langdon, y' know, wished to speak with you directly you came in."

"Yes," was the languid answer; "and where is she now?"

"In their salon, I fancy. She said she was too tired to dress for dinner. Had a beastly day, y' know."

Gray nodded, slowly ascended the winding stairway, and tapped at the door in the west corridor.

"Trez," answered a boyish voice, and Darcy was exuberantly welcomed by a ten-year-old Langdon. "The mater and sis are having a row in the gallery," said he, radiantly. "Old Smythe's been pestering her. Go out there: they don't mind you, you know, and I can't get away from here until they've finished."

But further confidences were ended by the sudden entrance of Miss Langdon herself. She had evidently been watching for Gray's return. Outstretched to him in eager greeting were Amy's long, slender white hands; uplifted to his in anxious inquiry were a pair of the softest, loveliest eyes. The voice in which she spoke was soft, almost tremulous. "What is it, Darcy?"

And the hand sidled into his, and Miss Langdon to a sofa whither she would have drawn him; but, despite the hand, which, despite itself, he released, he remained on his feet and concisely answered,—

"What you expected."

"From Mr. Hunter?—Gerald, go down and play with Ralph until mother sends for you."

"Ralph isn't there," was the petulant answer.

"Then go and play; go anyhow." Then she turned for answer. "From Mr. Hunter?"

"Yes."

"And it's true?"

"Yes, every cent."

Then the hands would be no longer denied. Both went impulsively out, seized his with no timid grasp, and drew him impetuously down beside her. Then to his amaze he saw the fair face quivering piteously, the lovely eyes brimming with tears, the soft red lips twitching with uncontrollable emotion. "Oh, you poor, dear boy—oh, Darcy, Darcy, I never—I never knew how much I cared for you till now," she almost sobbed. "Gerald, if you don't leave this room instantly I'll—"

But the boy bolted, and then Darcy saw that she was gazing up at him through a briny depth of tears. Even in his surprise, even in the thrill of joy with which he heard this fond confession, he recaptured himself, as it were, in the nick of time.

"Under the circumstances, that's something I didn't expect to hear," said Darcy.

"Under other circumstances you wouldn't have heard it," said Amy.

"It's a bit rough on Smythe, isn't it?"

"It in no wise concerns him. As for Rokeby, he must take me just as I am."

"Oh," said Gray, looking fairly at her at last, and beginning to

tug at the hand she still held in her two, "it's to be an international affair, is it? And I am addressing the future Countess of Lancaster?"

"Listen to reason, Darcy," said Miss Langdon, regaining dignity and self-possession at sight of the hunger in his eyes. "I have no money. I have every ambition, every longing, every desire that only position and money can gratify. I like you better than any man I ever knew, yet I wouldn't marry you, because you hadn't enough to offer, and I never so fully felt that I could and would marry you as now—when I can't. Even Mr. Smythe, with half a million, could not buy. I am going to a higher bidder,—the highest I could find. So far as I'm concerned, that settles my fate, but it's yours I care about, Darcy. You've been a dawdler and a do-nothing all your life. What *will* you do now?"

"Be true to my friends—and their estimate of me, probably. You wouldn't have me to disappoint them, would you?"

"What on earth do you mean? Speak sensibly, Darcy. I've never been worth your trust when you gave it. Now I'm honest with you. What will you do?"

"What they all prophesied,—nothing."

"Darcy, you have brains and energy. You have—persistence enough to win anything—that's worth having," she concluded, lamely.

There was a subdued sound of sniffing on the balcony without. Over the moonlit Alpine sea the mater was gazing towards the shores of France and wondering if many mothers had such trials as daughters at whose farthingales dangled half the eligibles in society. Smythe's mother, it seems, had taken up the pen to second the plaintive baa of her golden calf, and was dealing trenchant blows at her old crony, the mother of the belle of the season.

"Mother will be in here in a moment, Darcy. You must be frank with me, and Rokeby may be up—any moment. You will stay here until—you've had time to look about you?"

"I've had plenty of time to-day. Everything's settled. Tell Rokeby I'm sorry I shan't be able to take him bear- and elk-hunting, as I promised."

"Do you mean you're going soon,—to-morrow?"

"No," said Gray, rising, "I'm going to-night."

One instant the beautiful face beside him wore an expression of utter woe, of genuine sympathy and sorrow, then decked itself with winning and conventional smiles, for the salon door, opening at the moment, revealed young hopeful, the brother, tugging at the hand of the other hopeful, monocled. Knickers and evening dress confronted each other at the threshold. Rejected Yank, accepted Briton, met as do modern mortal rivals without sign of rancor.

"Er—ah—what's up, Gray?"

"Nothing. I'm—down."

By the midnight express he left *via* Berne for Basel. He could not face the throng of inquisitive sympathizers on the morrow. He meant to skip away unnoticed, but he had been too genuinely popular, and there are men, and many of them, Briton or Boston, who will go

out of their way to say good words to a fellow in distress. Three of them trailed Gray to the station and ran him to earth on the train, and said impetuous things about being his banker, and made other offers impossible to take seriously. The only thing he *could* take was a drink with all three, until they tumbled off at the conductor's shrill summons, and through the night, under the glitter of the lamps, something came gleaming and spinning, and he caught Rokeby's handsome flask and Rokeby's parting words:

"Take a drink for me once in a while, will you, old boy? *Au revoir.*"

---

#### CHAPTER I.

THE major was sprawled on the broad of his back under the shade of a spreading cottonwood, a slouch hat, battered and weather-stained, pulled well down over his fine, dark-brown eyes, their heavy brows concealed by its jagged brim, their long, thick, curling lashes downward sweeping towards the bronzed, sun-tanned cheeks. The bristling beard and curling black moustache concealed the lines of the mouth and jaws, rendering speculation as to the major's characteristics mere guess-work, which wouldn't be the case, said Captain Trotter, a physiognomist of the first order in his own estimation, if the major's face were, as usual with him in garrison, freshly and cleanly shaved except as to the upper lip. Open at the throat, the major's dark-blue flannel shirt rolled easily back, revealing a black waste of hairy stubble down to the protuberant "Adam's apple," below which the fair skin showed almost as white as a child's and well-nigh as soft. A devotee to cold water was the major, even in his cups, and that, too, in days when the traditions of the great war still held sway in the cavalry, and the cocktail was the rule, not the exception, at morning stable-call. Not that he preached the doctrine of total abstinence or looked upon himself as a model of virtue in any way. "Whiskey never did me any good," was his modest explanation. "I never seemed to need it or to care for it. I never saw any fun in getting full, and the only time I ever did, it made me sick for a week,—a thing that never happened to me before or since. If you like it, Ray, or if it agrees with you, Blake, why, go ahead. So long as you don't get full and neglect your business, it's none of mine." Time was in the regimental past, as the major very well knew and the minors sometimes said, when Ray occasionally "got full" and when Blake seemed to think it agreed with him,—until the day afterwards, at least. But Blake and Ray had found reason to part company with their old familiar friend, that intimacy having led, as often do others, to later estrangement; that familiarity having bred contempt; that warmth, as Tom Hood would have said, having produced a coldness. "Singed cats" was what the unreconciled of the subalterns called these erstwhile jovial blades, but never where either "cat" could hear, as each was known to be unpleasantly ready to back his views. Both officers had so far mended their ways in this respect that neither would sip from the seductive



bowl, yet each was entirely willing that the rest of the commissioned list should be free agents in the matter, with the possible exceptions of Brady, who never drank that he didn't make an ass of himself, and Rawson, who never drank that he didn't make trouble for somebody else.

And about these five men,—the major, whose name is spelled M-a-i-n-w-a-r-i-n-g and always pronounced "Mannerling," and Ray and Blake, who have often appeared in these chronicles of by-gone frontier days, and Brady and Rawson, who have never yet so appeared and who never will again, so far as this chronicler is concerned,—about these five men and one other yet to appear, hangs most of this story,—these six men and just two women.

*Place aux dames*, though this bivouac on the Boxelder was no place for them whatever, and neither woman was there at the time, and only one of them was known to any one of the men referred to. One of the women was Mrs. Mainwaring, and the other, a spinster, was Kate Leroy.

It was a hot day, a dusty day, and the command could prove it without the use of a word as it unsaddled in the grove and men and horses made for the nearest water. They had marched since early morn and covered twenty miles when the trumpets rang the signal for the final halt. They had been winding for hours in long column of twos down the sandy bottom of a vanished creek, and the sight of this oasis in the desert, the clump of cottonwoods with its outlying stragglers farther down stream, was indeed a grateful one. It told of the presence of living water, and the regiment, said Trooper Kelly, "was as dry as the chaplain's temperance sermon the night before Patrick's Day in the morning." Mainwaring's four troops, being first on the ground, pre-empted what grass there was before breaking for the spring. Trooper law reserved to the horses of the owner all space within lariat length of the firmly driven picket-pin, and woe to the man that "jumped the claim." In like manner had the major's "striker" pre-empted the biggest cottonwood for his master's roof-tree, and there, dusted, shaken, and smoothly spread, were the major's blankets when, fresh from his dip in the stream, that sturdy, keen-eyed, compactly built soldier came back for his rest.

And there he lay, the picture of trooper content, beguiling the moments until dinner should be ready, and trying hard not to go to sleep meantime, with a copy of "*Les Misérables*," hauled from the depth of his capacious saddle-bags. Having had little schooling to speak of, Mainwaring was an assiduous reader of fiction, and prided himself on the fact.

Presently, without lifting his eye from the page, or glancing towards the party interrogated, who was sprawled in similar fashion under an adjacent tree, the major popped the following question:

"Blake, what's savvy ke pew?"

And Blake, without lifting his eyes from the written pages of the missive in his lean brown hand, responded, after the manner of soldierly folk, "Damfino."

The major's brows contracted in a scowl. Suspiciously he glanced at his long-legged comrade. "Thought you spoke French," said he.

To which Blake blandly responded, with modest and not inexcusable hesitancy,—

"We'll—er—not always. Isn't it—possibly, *sauve qui peut*?"

"Well, *sove ke puh*, then," responded Mainwaring, with disdainful emphasis on the convenient monosyllable. "What's that?"

"That," said Blake, "is what the girls say when Brady tries to dance,—Jump for your lives and—Brady take the hindmost. It's polite French for 'the jig is up.'"

Captain Ray, stretched at ease upon a costly Navajo blanket of which he was inordinately proud, reached out with his moccasined foot and indented the canvas re-enforcement of his comrade's field riding-breeches. "Quit it, Blake," he muttered.

But the major needed no man to protect his interests. He might not know French, but he knew Blake, and liked him,—ordinarily.

"I more than half thought you didn't know, Legs," he said, with a yawn. "Legs" was a regimental pet name for the longest and lankiest of the commissioned list. "You West Pointers have nearly all had two years' schooling in that tongue, and another year in Spanish, and I'm blessed if ever a one of you could speak either. I'd have a heap more respect for you if you'd come out like a man and say you didn't know, like Ray, for instance. There's no nonsense about him."

Here Blake kicked backward, in delighted return of his comrade's broad hint. "Well, major," he hastened to say, "my translation was a trifle free, perhaps, but the phrase is a clumsy one to turn into English. Ray will agree with me as to the translation. The main trouble with his French is the accent. It's a combination of blue grass and Apache."

"Well, he has the good sense to keep it to himself, then," answered Mainwaring, still a trifle sulky. "I'd pattern after him, if I were you."

"Faith and so I would, major mine, did not my innocent associates so often take me for a lexicon. But, now, *you* ought to speak French like a native. Mrs. Mainwaring does. You couldn't have a better teacher, and Stannard says all a man needs to learn anything in this world is brains and time. You've got lots of—time."

"What's that about Stannard?" interrupted the major, sharply, and Blake's diversion had told, as he meant that it should. If there was one man in the army of whom Mainwaring was jealous, it was Stannard. He, like Stannard, had been a capital troop commander for years. He had attained, at last, the rank of major, *vice* Barry promoted, only a year or so after Stannard; had served just as well as had Stannard; had as fine a war record, and an honored and honorable name; had a charming wife, health, and competence, yet mourned in secret—even at times made audible moan—over the fact that among the officers and men of the regiment what Stannard said, thought, did, was never to be questioned. Stannard was authority on all points of soldiering; Stannard was the expert engineer, builder, draughtsman, topographer, and all-round military "sharp;" while he, Mainwaring, whose troop had been a model, whose battalion was now really in finer shape than Stannard's, and who had abundant means and spent where

Stannard saved, was looked upon in the cavalry as a good soldier, a fine officer, despite his surly mannerisms, and yet because he hadn't enjoyed Stannard's advantages and a college, or even high school, training, he must submit to perennial playing of second fiddle. It set him against Stannard, and it led eventually to trouble.

"If you'd only be wise, Leonard," his brighter better half had said to him, "you wouldn't ask questions of Blake. Look it up in the encyclopædia, or even ask me."

"Why, hang it, Laura!" interrupted the major, "half my years are spent in saddle out in the field. You and the encyclopædia are a month's march away. I can't help wanting to know what things mean."

"Then ask Captain Truscott or Captain Freeman." She knew too much to wound him by suggesting Stannard. "Blake's propensity to burlesque everything is irresistible unless you happen to be alone with him." And Mainwaring would promise, and despite his promise would fall, for, as he frankly admitted, he couldn't help wanting to know, you know, and, as it never occurred to him that he could mispronounce any word, foreign or domestic, poor Mainwaring was eternally putting his foot in it. He and Tommy Hollis were Blake's entire delight, and neither man could resent his witticisms, even when they verged on the personal, for Blake, like Ray, was a regimental idol because of deeds that won a tribute outvying the Victoria Cross or Congressional Medal of Honor. Mainwaring swore by both as soldiers, and Hollis fairly worshipped Blake. But Tommy was away on other duty just now, and the shafts of the long-legged captain's ridicule fell most improperly on his sluggish-witted chief.

Blake did not thoroughly like him. He thought Mainwaring selfish, opinionated, and conceited. He admitted him to be a first-rate soldier, a fine drill-master and tactician, a truthful, honest, and pure-minded man, a devoted husband and father,—in fact, one of the representative men of the cavalry. It wasn't that he was narrow (his tolerance on the whiskey question was an evidence that he was not), yet he was "butt-headed," said Blake. "He's perpetually referring to Ray and to me as the exponents of the liquor habit, when both of us quit long ago. We all like Stannard, and he doesn't; at least he is always ready to disparage anything Stannard says or does, and if he were Stannard's senior instead of junior he'd overrule any decision or order of Stannard's just because it was Stannard's. So when he comes out with his bulls I can't help goading him a bit. Somebody's got to keep him in check, or we'll be getting the laugh from those fellows of the Eleventh and Twelfth."

"They wouldn't see the blunders, Blake, only you show 'em up," said Ray, in remonstrance, and with not a little reason, for Blake was incorrigible. "Some day you'll cut Mainwaring to the quick, and he comes of a stock that hits hard and doesn't forgive easy or forget at all. Better hold off, Legs."

And "hold off" Legs had to for several days of a dreary homeward march, dreary because the colonel meant to rest the horses thoroughly after a fierce and furious chase and campaign, and so made

short marches where the officers and men would gladly have made two a day. The road was dusty, the October sunshine was hot and dry, the nights were snapping cold, but here at last they were only one day out from their new station, Fort Ransom, and Blake had broken bonds again. Raising himself on elbow and peering across the blue-shirted shoulder of his friend, Ray could see that Mainwaring was still glowering at him, and evidently pondering over that reference to his having *time* enough to learn anything. As yet its full significance was not apparent, but it was the policy of wisdom to distract his attention and set his wits to work on something else. Like the horse, which noble animal Mainwaring almost worshipped, he could consider only one point at a time. So up rose Ray and strolled over to him. "If you've no objections, major, I'd like to ask the colonel to let my quartermaster sergeant ride into Ransom to-night. He tells me his wife is quite ill. The ambulance is going, and will give him a lift. We'll lead his horse with the troop to-morrow."

"Why not ride him in to-night?" asked Mainwaring, who had served but little under Atherton since the war, and knew not how strict were his rules regarding horses.

"Because the colonel wishes every horse to share and share alike. The sergeant's horse would have an extra twenty miles if ridden in to-night. Yonder comes Stannard's battalion now," he said, pointing to the dust-cloud sailing slowly towards them from the north. "He'll bivouac above us, I reckon."

"Yes, and spoil our water, like as not," growled Mainwaring. "But we've got the grass and shade."

"Devil doubt you," muttered Blake, "and you've got the best of both." Then, aloud, "Ask the old man, with my compliments, if I may do him the honor of dining with him to-morrow, Billy. Mrs. Atherton has everything ready for his coming, I'll be bound, while your better half and mine and the major's here can't come till we get there and choose quarters."

"Mrs. Mainwaring will be there quicker than I will," said the major, promptly.

"That's all easily explained. Mrs. Mainwaring knows the major's quarters can go to nobody but the major, and she can move in at once. We poor devils of troop-leaders must wait till our seniors have chosen. What's more, Mrs. Mainwaring has no nurse and babies to look after."

"No, but she's bringing a companion with her, in the shape of her niece that she's often talked to me about. I think I told you about her,—Miss Leroy. She's been abroad for a year, and wants to come and see something of her own country. They ought to reach Butte to-night, or early in the morning."

"Will she?" exclaimed Blake. "Then like as not she'll have an escort: Rawson's coming out with a batch of recruits."

"Bah!" growled Mainwaring, who had little use for Rawson or any other officer who was away on leave when his regiment was in the field. "Mrs. Mainwaring's never met him, and, if she had, would feel mighty small security in his escort,—a fellow that'll be held up with a whole car-load of passengers by only two robbers."

Mainwaring alluded to a matter that was a sore spot in the —th and that never yet had been fully explained. But Mr. Rawson, three months earlier that summer, had unquestionably been relieved of his few valuables at the point of the pistol on the K. P. Road. The regiment meant to worry the life out of him when he rejoined, but didn't like it that Mainwaring, a new-comer, should be the first to crack the whip. Blake almost wanted to blaze up, but thought it best perhaps to wait for Ray, and so subsided.

Ray, however, had sauntered out to the edge of the scanty patch of timber, and, shading his eyes with his brown hand, was scanning with professional interest the long column of dusty troopers, two abreast, that came filing into view around a little point five hundred yards away. Well out in their front, short, square, and stocky, rode their major, his adjutant, trumpeter, and orderly jogging along behind. To him rode the colonel's messenger, the regimental adjutant, and pointed out a line some distance up-stream. Thither the head of column veered, moving at steady walk. The guidon-bearer, at a signal from the battalion adjutant, spurred out to the front, and, with the old silken swallow-tail streaming in the wind, loped across the level to a point ten yards or so from the bank, was halted there by the young officer in person, and then, lance at rest, he and his horse stood motionless. Never quickening the pace, the captain at the head of Stannard's foremost troop directed his march on this living guide-post. The guidon of the second troop, followed speedily by those of the third and fourth in like manner, darted out across the prairie, each in succession being halted and established at half-distance in rear of his predecessor on the line of guides. Each troop directed itself upon its own color; each in succession formed line to the left as its leading two came opposite the guidon; each was aligned to the right; then, without loss of time, the trumpets sounded, "Prepare to dismount;" the brown carbines were jerked from their sockets and tossed over the right shoulder as the odd-numbered troopers rode clear of the rank. "Dismount," clamored the trumpet, and down out of sight sank some fifty-odd blue flannel shirts and rusty old hats in each line. "Form rank." And out from among the chargers popped the vanished riders, each laying hold of the reins close to the bit as the line reformed and the captain said his brief speech: "Water as soon as you like, men, and graze well out to the north until nightfall. No side lines necessary to-day. Dismiss the troop, sergeant." And the next thing a dozen men were scampering like mad, lariats and picket-pins swinging, heading for the most promising patches of grass. Each picket-pin was stamped home, the lariats uncurled to their full length, and then back ran the troopers to unsaddle and lead to water. Ten minutes more, and the chargers of Stannard's battalion, perhaps two hundred and fifty in all, were being slowly driven in four distinct herds well out upon the northward slopes, where, after a preliminary roll, each horse set contentedly to grazing. Those pre-empted patches close at hand were reserved for their further use at night.

And then the little cook-fires began to blaze along the bank, and the pack-trains shambled in, and were unloaded in the twinkling of an



eye. The mules went blinking off to water, and the major, never quitting his saddle until his last trooper dismounted, slowly lowered himself to earth and went off in search of the colonel.

"If you've no objections, sir, I'd like to send a sergeant in ahead to-night."

"Why, Stannard," said the colonel, looking up from under his hat-brim in some surprise, "that's just what Ray's been asking. Anything amiss?"

"Well, his time expires to-morrow, sir. It's old Bannon, of 'B' Troop, and he'd like to catch the East-bound train, so's to have all the time possible to go and visit his children in Illinois. He'll re-enlist at once."

"And your man, Ray?"

"Is Sergeant Merriweather, sir. He says his wife's at Ransom quite sick, and he's anxious and troubled about her."

"Isn't he the man that we had to reprimand for letting certain horses stray up on the Belle Fourche?"

"The very man, sir. He is careless at times, and not altogether reliable, but he's one of the smartest, nattiest men I've got, and——"

"Didn't he marry that pretty maid-servant of the Freemans' after we got back from the Ute campaign?"

"Yes, sir, and Freeman hasn't forgiven me yet," answered Captain Ray, his white teeth gleaming. "I'm very sure I should be glad to have him take her back. She's turned the heads of some of my best men, and is running Merriweather heels over head in debt."

The colonel pondered a moment. "I greatly dislike to refuse you anything," he said; "but every time we come in from scout or campaign, since I joined the regiment, no sooner are we within a day's march or so of the home station—or any station, for that matter—than several men ask to ride in ahead. At first even the officers did, and there were as many as a dozen men. Now we've reduced it to two. When did Merriweather hear from his wife?"

"The mail rider, sir, going up to the Sioux Agency, met us this morning early and gave him a letter. He brought it to me to read. It was written by the post-trader's wife. She says Mrs. Merriweather is really seriously ill."

"Very good. Then he can go by the ambulance. So can your man, major. Tell them both to report here at three o'clock. Isn't Merriweather's time nearly out, Ray?"

"Only two months to serve, sir, and he says he's going into business with a brother in Chicago. I lose three non-commissioned officers this fall in that way, and one of them I couldn't take on again: he's all broken down with wounds and rheumatism. You'll have to favor me a bit in the matter of recruits, colonel. I need six, or shall before we're a month older."

"You shall have the first good man that enlists at Ransom, Ray. I'm told we may pick up some first-rate material there, the mines have broken so many."

"All right, colonel; and I'll remind you if I see any likely civilian hanging around head-quarters. Good-day, sir, and thank you very

much." So saying, Captain Ray wheeled about and trudged away down-stream to make report to his battalion commander.

"Did he say Merriweather could go?" asked the major, glancing up at Ray's sunshiny face. "I wouldn't, if I were in his place."

"He wasn't over-willing at first," was the answer. "However, my fellows will all be wishing themselves back in the field before they've been home a fortnight,—small blame to them."

"What's the reason you're so down on garrison life, Ray?"

"I'm not down on it exactly, major, but if it weren't for the wife and boys I'd be glad if we were forever in the field," answered Ray. "Men get killed in this Indian business, but they—keep out of trouble. There's Merriweather, now. He was a tip-top sergeant in the Sioux campaign. He was one of the best all-round troopers and non-commissioned officers in the regiment all through the campaigns that followed in the next three years, and he's been running down steadily ever since he fell in love with that flibbertigibbet of Freeman's. Garrison life and girls spoil many a good cavalryman," he concluded, oracularly.

"Don't dare me to tell that to Mrs. Ray as your sentiments," grinned the major.

"Oh, everything depends on the girl, of course," said Ray, growing instantly grave. "Blakey and I—well, I, at least, owe everything to my wife," he finished, almost reverently. Then presently he spoke again. "But what chance has the average trooper? What manner of woman has he to mate with, if he mate at all? Next batch of recruits I get should be anchorites, so far as women are concerned."

"Sailors are just as bad as soldiers," said Mainwaring, sagely. Whereat Blake ducked his head under his blanket in convulsions of delight.

"I know, sir," said Ray, glancing vengefully at the contortions of the worn gray slumber-robe, and biting his own lip hard to repress the bubbling fun. "What I mean is that I'd like to get the troop full of fellows that couldn't be twisted around a woman's finger."

"You never will, Ray," said Mainwaring, thereby proving that he knew human nature, if not books. "You can take your pick of this gang that Rawson's bringing out with him, or of any of the men that offer themselves at Ransom, and I'm willing to bet that the next man you enlist will be woman-driven from the word go."

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## CHAPTER II.

THE night express was fifty minutes late already, and engine 783, waiting at the Junction with her snow-plough set, was hissing and rumbling impatiently. The big brown building, embracing hotel and waiting-rooms, ticket- and station-master's office, loomed up against the star-dotted sky. The switch-lights gleamed in crimson, green, and dazzling white here, there, and everywhere along the glinting rails. Bleary lamps were burning in frost-covered windows, and tiny sparks

fluttered from the pipe of the solitary biped on the platform, a burly man in the toil-stained garb of a locomotive engineer, a sturdy fellow who limped as he stamped up and down the creaking planks of the platform, his hands in his pockets, his eyes everywhere. To him came forth his fireman, splitting his mouth with a wedge of bilious-looking pound-cake. He strove to speak, but, finding articulation impossible, jerked backward his head and pantomimed the process of serving himself with a cup of comforting drink,—coffee, presumably, for he was fresh from the lunch-counter.

"Come, swallow the rest of that grub, now, and be lively with your oil-can. We can't wait two minutes after she once gets in. No," he continued, as the younger repeated his persuasive pantomime, "I had my tea at home, and that's enough. You'll die of over-eating, first thing you know. Do your best now. We've got an extra Pullman and a car-load of greenhorns to haul up to Butte this night of all others, and I'm betting it's snowing in the mountains now."

So saying, the engineer turned and gazed anxiously westward, where even the stars seemed blotted from sight, then quickly whirled about and bent his ear.

"Coming at last," he muttered. "That's old Coyote's yelp for the cross-roads. Damned little wind for whistling has she left, either. No wonder No. 3's late, with nothing better than that limping carcass to drag it. She ought to be in the bone-yard,—ought to 'a' been there a year ago. But here's the beauty," said he to himself, as he turned and laid a loving hand on the massive driving-rod of the huge machine. "Lively, Scut," he added: "3's coming."

Scut was descending from the cab as a cat comes down a tree, backward. "What 'n 'ell they takin' recruits to Ransom for now?" he asked. "The war's over."

"It's to fill the gaps made when the war wasn't over, young man, and mighty hard they'll find it to fill some of 'em, too. Jim Strang, that was killed at Cave Springs, was corporal with me in Bates's troop eight years ago, and there wasn't a better sergeant in all the cavalry. Lo loves a shining mark, or I'd never got hit twice in one day."

"Would you go back to soldierin' if you could, Mr. Long?" asked the fireman, tilting up his long-necked can as he thrust the nozzle deep in between the spokes of a massive driver.

"I? Give me back the legs I had before the Sioux made a sieve of my skin, and it isn't the rail I'd be riding, but the best sorrel in Billy Ray's troop, and with the best office in it, and that's first sergeant."

"It's takin' chances to be in the cavalry these days," said he of the oil-can, listening to the low, far-away rumble of the coming train. "Do you see her head-light yet?"

"She isn't through the cut," was Long's answer. "As to taking chances, they've done nothing but take chances in that regiment ever since the war; yet there isn't a day of our lives we don't take chances, and bigger chances, right here on this mountain division."

A tall young fellow in travelling-cap and ulster had come out from the lunch-room and was strolling over towards the hissing engine.

He stopped and listened as Long spoke, then seemed to be pondering over the words and looking to the engine-man for explanation.

"How do you mean?" asked Scut, pausing in his work and looking up. "We haven't had a 'hold-up' on the road for over a year."

"Neither have we had a head-on collision, nor spreading rails, nor a plunge from a trestle, but they are only three of the things likely to occur any minute, especially when trains are running behind as we are to-night,—all on account of that one-eyed Coyote that's peeping at you down yonder."

It was the head-light of No. 3, just dawning on the view at Mile End Crossing, to which the engineer referred.

"Watch how slowly she comes," he added. "The old maid is about worn out. Here's the girl that can shake that train up grade as though 'twas made of bandboxes. I'll bet you we make Butte by seven o'clock."

"I'll bet you don't, if you'll let me in," was the cool interjection of the young man ulster-clad; "for Butte's my objective point."

"What do you know about it, or about railroading?" asked Long, suspiciously.

"As much as you did when you quit soldiering, and no more, wherein we have much in common, Mr. Long; but here's where the difference comes in. You quit soldiering to take to the railroad; I quit the road to take to soldiering."

"Oh, I see. Then you're an officer?" queried Long, his accustomed lips framing the little word "sir" and almost resenting his enforced omission of the once familiar monosyllable. Long said "sir" to no one under the division superintendent now.

"I? Devil a bit," was the laughing answer. "I'm not even a lance,—not even a recruit. Man, I haven't signed my papers yet."

"Then take a fool's advice and don't sign them," interposed Long. "You've got no call to go soldiering. Such as you come in only when it's whiskey or women or cards."

"Say it's all three, if you like," was the half-laughing answer. "I heard of you as one of the old cavalrymen at the barracks yonder," and the stranger nodded carelessly over his shoulder in the direction of the post, established long years before when the road was being built. "They sent me there by mistake. It's the cavalry I want, not infantry."

The engineer looked the speaker over in surprise. Away down the track the head-light of the incoming train was growing bigger every moment, and the rumble of the bulky approach could be plainly heard.

"You don't look like a man who had to take to soldiering," he said.

"Oh, I'm not," was the prompt, good-natured reply. "I do it simply because I've a hankering that way, and—no other," he added, under his breath. "Perhaps you can tell me something of the regiment at Ransom?"

"Enough about it to talk from here to 'Frisco, but there's no time now. We've got to pull out with that train the moment their engine

gets out of our way. But you're the first man I ever met out here who would openly say he was going to enlist. They all come up shamefaced like, as though it was the last thing they wanted people to know."

"Oh, I never found it paid to sail under false colors," was the answer, in a tone of gay good humor, not unmixed with a dash of reckless disdain. "I've nothing to lose. But I would like to ask you something about the troop commanders there at Ransom. Can't you give me a lift in the cab? I've a pocketful of better weeds than you get out this way, if that's any inducement." And, so saying, he reached down into the deep pocket of his ulster and brought out a handful of cigars.

Mr. Long's manner changed in an instant. "'Gainst orders," said he, briefly, gazing suspiciously into the stranger's face as he spoke. "Better get your ticket, if you're going to Butte." And, swinging himself up to his perch, he grasped the reversing lever with one hand and the throttle with the other. Scut laid hold of the cord and set the big bell to swinging warning of their coming. The huge machine began slowly to move rearward as the much maligned and belated Coyote came hissing by on the fireman's side, and that begrimed young man availed himself of the chance to chaff his fellow-workers in the flitting cab. He took no heed, therefore, of the stranger's parting hail, but Long was eying him closely and listening for any word.

"I've got tickets all right," said the lonely man on the platform, "but I'd rather sit up in a cab than sleep in a Pullman. It's all right, though. Have a smoke anyhow." And with lavish hand he tossed half a dozen cigars into the cab as he walked beside the moving engine. Then, with a cordial wave of his hand, he turned aside to the lunch-room, into the door-way of which a half-score of hungry passengers from the arriving train were eagerly pushing.

"Only three minutes, gents," sung out the conductor. "We've got to make up time before we reach the Rockies—can't do it there." And he darted into the train-despatcher's office to register and receive his orders.

Meantime Scut, still clinging to the bell-cord with one hand, was scooping up cigars with the right. "That fellow's a prince," said he. "Just look at that for a seegar." And he held it admiringly up to Long to see, and was amazed at the gloom in his companion's face. "Why, what's up?" he asked.

"What's up?" repeated the engineer, as he slowed down on nearing the forward end of the mail-car. "A hold-up, unless I'm mistaken, and the fewer of them cigars you stick in your mouth the more brains you'll have left in the morning." With a sharp click the heavy coupling-pin was driven home, and Long sent the reversing lever over to the front, then poked his head out of the side of the cab and shouted to a train-hand he saw hurrying by, "Where you got them recruits, Billy?"

"First coach behind the baggage," was the answer, as the man glanced over his shoulder. "There's some of 'em now." And, as he spoke, bounding, laughing, and dodging through the knot of hungry



passengers, half a dozen young fellows in fatigue uniform or bright blue overcoats went hastening by to the lunch-room, followed by shouts from somewhere back along the train. Presently a middle-aged man in the garb of a sergeant of cavalry came stalking after them, a man who seemed just aroused from sound sleep, and not too well pleased as a consequence.

"Get back to that car, you men," he ordered, authoritatively. "Didn't I tell you not a soul of you could leave it without my permission?"

But the recruits were lined up at the lunch-counter by this time, and gleefully shouting for coffee and reaching for doughnuts, pie, anything edible within reach. The waiter looked perturbed and hesitated. The proprietor came hurrying over from his desk. The little throng of passengers seemed sympathetic and interested. "Who's to pay for this?" demanded the owner, as the sergeant came fuming and almost fighting his way into the crowded room. "Have your men got any money?"

"Course we have," sung out a jovial Pat, "and the credit of a benevolent and paternal government to back it, and there's my last cent to prove what I say," he added, whacking down a silver dollar on the counter.

"That ain't enough by the mate to it," said the proprietor, gruffly. "Come, clear out, you boys. Train's going; no time for coffee. This will pay for the things you're eating," said he; and he made a grab for the dollar, but Pat was too quick for him.

"Board," shouted a hoarse voice on the platform without.

"Back to your car, you men," ordered the sergeant.

"Give me that dollar," demanded the boss.

"Give us the coffee," replied the recruits, and for once the populace seemed to side with the soldier. The tall young man in the ulster and travelling-cap lounged up to the counter and tossed a two-dollar bill at the angry manager. "Give them what they want," said he, "and be quick about it. Have some coffee yourself, sergeant. There'll be no other chance till you get to Butte." Then, with swift, significant, downward glance at the flap of a pocket, he lifted into view the silver top of a sizable flask, and the sergeant grinned and nodded appreciatively. The steaming cups were slid along the board, the embryo soldiers laughing and hustling good-naturedly, pouring the hot liquid into the thick stone sauters and blowing industriously at the yellow-brown flood. The conductor came to the door and stormed; the passengers began to edge away for their cars. No. 783 gave a warning whoop or two, and the fireman pulled at the bell-cord, but the blue-coats wouldn't budge.

"Go ahead, Long. Damned if I'll hold this train another second," shouted the conductor, with energetic wave of his lantern. Hiss went the stop-cocks. The big engine quivered and trembled in response, and with convulsive cough a volume of inky smoke was belched from the stack. Scut's bell clanged furiously, but only very slowly the long, ponderous train began to move. The crockery rattled and the windows shook as the massive engine came boiling and rumbling and

panting by. The conductor heard his name called by the engineer and hurried alongside. "Look out for that kid in the big ulster. Tell you why at Willow Springs," was the hoarse warning, as, with slowly quickening speed, old 783 went ponderously on. The conductor looked dazed. The joyous band of blue-coats came tumbling forth as the foremost car rolled smoothly past, and, agile as monkeys, leaped to the platform of the baggage and "smoker," waving their caps and shouting jovial farewells. The sergeant, once more assuming official relations, sternly ordered them within their own car, and bade them keep quiet, that the other men, wearied, might sleep. Then the conductor came hurriedly in and glanced eagerly about him as the sergeant looked at his watch.

It was just half-past one.

"Who's your friend in the ulster?" demanded the conductor. "Where'd he go?"

"Never saw him before in my life," said the sergeant. "I s'posed we left him there," he added, with regretful thought of that handsome, capacious, silver-topped flask.

"Did you see where he went?" asked the conductor of the brakeman who followed in.

"Thought he jumped on the next car," was the answer. "He had a grip-sack, I know."

"Go and see," was the brief order.

The official turned once more to the sergeant, who was settling himself back in his seat. "Say, you'll have to take better care of your men," he began. "I can't have them bouncing out at every stopping-place and delaying the train."

"You don't," said the sergeant, with a yawn. "That's the first time any one of them has got off, and they wouldn't have done that if it wasn't that they were hard up for coffee."

"You should have given them coffee last night at the supper station," said the conductor, wrathfully.

"I did, and it was so bad they threw it away. This was better, and I'm sorry they weren't all awake to have some. They'll need it before we get to Butte. What time can we make it now, d'you s'pose?"

"Not before seven, if we do then. We have two freights and a cattle-train to meet, and everything's running crooked to-night, even if we have no other trouble. Sure you never saw that fellow in the ulster before?"

"Sure. What's the matter with him? He treated like a nabob."

"That's one reason I want to know all about him. What arms have you fellows?"

"None at all," was the answer, as the sergeant looked up in surprise. "I've a revolver, of course, but that's all. Why? You never have a 'hold-up' along here, do you?"

But the conductor did not answer. The train had "struck its gait," as he expressed it, now, and was swaying as it tore westward along the rattling rails. The brakeman was hastening back to the car. "See him?" queried the conductor, impatiently.

"No, sir: he's gone back to the sleeper."

Somewhere among the drowsing car-load of recruits a voice was uplifted in not unmelodious song. Most of the men were sleeping soundly, but the lively squad of night-owls just bundled aboard, refreshed by their coffee and bite at the station, seemed desirous of further entertainment. "Odd," said the conductor, "I've hauled many a lot of poor devils out to Wyoming and beyond; most of 'em never came back, but I never yet saw a lot that didn't sing. What on earth have they got to sing for?"

"The Lord knows," answered the sergeant, "and I've been soldiering twenty years."

"Always in the cavalry?"

"Yes, all but one 'listment in a casemate that brought me nearer to desertion than ever I thought to be."

"Never meet my engineer,—Jimmy Long? He used to be sergeant in the cavalry out here. Got shot through the legs in an Indian fight seven or eight years ago and had to quit."

"Know of him well, as most of us did, and I'd be glad to see him. He's pulling us to-night, is he?"

"Yes, and I wish you'd come forward with me when we get to Willow Springs, only a few miles ahead now. He thinks there's something wrong with that young fellow in the ulster. I've got to go back and look him up. Meet me on the platform, right-hand side, when we stop, will you?"

The sergeant nodded, and the conductor went his way.

In the foremost sleeper he found the object of his search, already comfortably ensconced in the smoking-compartment, his ulster thrown aside, his feet on the opposite seat, a fragrant cloud of smoke curling from the tip of his cigar. He had raised the window, and was gazing out upon a spangled firmament above, a black void where lay the barren earth below. Without a word, his cigar still between his teeth, he felt in the waistcoat-pocket of a well-made travelling-suit of tweed, took out a card-case, and extracted therefrom his railway and berth tickets and handed them to the lantern-bearing official.

The conductor studied the former closely. It was a "through" from Chicago to Butte, unlimited. He turned it upside down, hind side foremost, and still seemed to find nothing amiss.

"Where'd you get this?" he presently asked, glancing keenly at the young man from under his cap visor. The passenger, still without removing his cigar, simply pointed to the head of the ticket, which showed that it was purchased at the office of the C. R. I. & P. in Chicago. "Stopped off at Platte Junction?" asked the conductor.

"Yes. What time will we reach Butte?"

"Not before seven. Plenty of time to go to bed and sleep." And the tone of the railway official plainly indicated that that was what the conductor thought the young man ought to do, instead of mooning to all hours of the night in the smoking-room. The passenger gravely nodded acquiescence and said nothing. After an irresolute pause the conductor again spoke: "Did you tell the porter to show you to your berth?"

The traveller in tweeds was evidently a youth of varying moods. Chatting with the engineer he was frank, jovial, light-hearted, even confiding. In the brief scene with the troopers he was laughing and friendly, even lavish, from their point of view. Was it some sense of suspicion, some subtle intuition that he was the object of a special scrutiny on the conductor's part,—that he was being subjected to a cross-questioning never thought of in the case of other patrons of the road? Something in the conductor's look, tone, and manner had given him umbrage. Like some itinerant clam, storm-tossed and at odds with the world, he drew within his shell and clamped the jaws of his reserve. Something akin to a frown settled between his eyebrows. He looked coolly, almost defiantly, straight into the half-closed eyes of his questioner, with a pair of wide-open keen blue orbs of his own, and under his soft brown moustache his curved pink lips set like a trap. For a moment he made no reply, then finally answered, "No."

Mr. Jarvis was an old hand. He had run trains over the Trans-continental ever since it first bored a way through the hunting-grounds of the Sioux, and many a tramp had he hustled off the cars in mid-prairie, but this was no tramp. This was a self-possessed, well-dressed, fine-looking tourist, and, but for the straight, sharp, American clip to his words, rather of the English type. He nettled the conductor, and the conductor had nettled him. Each was now bristling at every point, and in no mood to appreciate the other's position.

"Well, do you propose to sit up all night?" was the next question, propounded in a tone common enough on the far-away Western railway a decade or so ago.

"What earthly business is it of yours whether I do or not? I've bought a berth and the privilege of using it or not as I see fit."

The train was slowing. It was nearing Willow Springs. The conductor had other duties to attend to, and knew he must quit the field.

"I'll see you later, my cocky friend," he muttered to himself, as he turned angrily away, with distinct sense of defeat, then let himself out on the platform with a most unprofessional slam of the sleeper door.

It was a long hundred yards up to the engine, but Jarvis hastened through the day-car and smoker until he came to the recruit-car platform, by which time the train was at a stand and he could safely spring off and run alongside. Under the dim light of the station, the tall figure of the cavalry sergeant loomed before his eyes, his chevrons, stripes, and buttons gleaming. The station-keeper came sleepily forth as the conductor stepped into the dim beam of light from the office window. "Come on up to the engine with me," he said, and, wondering, the drowsy servitor followed. The platform was short, and the trio presently had to spring down and trudge along the prairie sod by the track side. Long was waiting for them, leaning out from his cab. At sight of the once familiar crossed sabres and buttons a gleam of pleasure shot across his grimy face.

"Hullo," he said. "I used to know pretty much every fellow that wore the stripes in that regiment."

"And pretty much every fellow in it knew you or of you. My name's Kearney," said the sergeant, reaching up a hand. But the conductor had no time for ceremonies.

"What's this about the feller in the ulster?" he demanded. "He's ticketed through to Butte from Chicago, and is sassy as they make 'em. What d' you know?"

"I don't *know* anything. But you remember that affair on the K. P. last July,—the swell that shot the expressman near Wallace? Well, he was just such another good-looking fellow as this, well dressed and all that, with lots of money. What makes me suspicion this chap is that he says he's out here to enlist; wanted to ride in the cab and talk about it to me. Who ever heard of a fellow wanting to enlist until he was dead broke or half starved? This young fellow's pockets are full of cigars."

"He don't want to enlist," chimed in Sergeant Kearney, derisively. "He has a roll as thick as my hand. Treated all the crowd back there at the Junction."

"You hear that?" said Long. "It's just like as not he's aboard to find out who's in that sleeper and who's armed in the day-car, and we'll meet his pals somewhere up in the foot-hills. Better let some of the soldiers into the express-car and one or two here with me after we pass No. 12. Where does she side-track for us?"

"We'll get orders at Boulder Creek," answered the conductor. "I'll watch our cocky friend till then. No. 12 can't pull out of Thunder Gap till we get there. Now let her go for all she's worth, Jimmy."

Then back to the platform he hurried, eagerly explaining to the silent station-master the cause of their delay earlier in the night. The sergeant sprang aboard, and Jarvis swung his lantern.

"You haven't heard of 12 at all?" he shouted.

"Not since she left Pawnee," was the answering cry. "They'll hold her at the Gap."

And now as the sergeant re-entered the stuffy coach the songster had ceased. The melodious sounds had given place to many a snore. He glanced again at his watch, and the hands were pointing to five minutes of two.

### CHAPTER III.

RUSHING westward through the night, the great train was indeed "going for all she was worth." Twenty-five miles away lay the foot-hills. There began the tortuous up-hill climb to the high plateau at Pawnee, forty miles of twist, turn, tug, and pull, that in the earlier days of the road were never attempted without two engines. Now the mammoths like 783 scorned even a pusher. But to-night she had to haul an extra sleeper and an extra coach, both crowded, the latter packed with recruits, the former with a joyous party of excursionists, bound for the Pacific coast. It was swift, straight, smooth running along the flats of the broad valley, dotted here and there as it was with

farms and ranches, and traversed over the old buffalo ranges by great herds of horned cattle. This crisp, moonless, star-lit night all the Western world was dark and still, but for the clank and rush of the flashing monster with its long, dimly-lighted train. The lonely occupant of the smoking-compartment, gazing silently out upon the northward heavens, had forgotten to keep alive the tiny fire of his cigar, and it had died unnoticed between his long, white, slender fingers. A glance at the handsome watch he drew from his waistcoat-pocket told him it was almost two o'clock as, after a brief stop at some unknown, almost unseen, station, the train rolled on again. The porter had come in to ask some question about how he would have his pillow, front or back, and was told it made no difference. Would the gentleman like one here in the smoking-room? No, he would turn in presently. Call him in plenty of time for Butte. Then the porter tiptoed off to the rear of the heavily curtained aisle and curled himself up in a vacant section, leaving the stranger to his thoughts.

And that these were sad there could be no doubt whatever. His face as it sank into repose looked white and drawn in the dim light of the overhanging lamp. Once or twice, as he gazed out upon the waste of darkness, his eyes seemed to fill, his lip to quiver with strange, strong emotion. Once he bent forward, covered his face with both hands, and leaned his elbows on his knees, then suddenly started, pulled himself together, "braced up" as he perhaps would have expressed it, thrust the moist end of the cigar between his teeth, found it cold and unresponsive, tossed it away, arose, gave himself a shake, took the flask from his ulster-pocket and passed through the door-way to the lavatory where were the ice-water tanks, and started despite himself.

A haggard face, flattened against the glass of the forward door-way, was peering in at him,—a face that was instantly withdrawn.

This was before the days of vestibuled cars. Seizing the door-knob and laying his flask on one of the basins, the young fellow quickly let himself out upon the platform and glanced about him. There on the lowest step, clinging to the hand-rail, cringed and cowered the figure of a man who turned his head and gazed piteously, pleadingly up at the tall stranger. A tramp beyond doubt, and a shivering wretch he was, for the night air was sharply cold. A powerful hand was laid upon the shoulder of the crouching figure and heaved it up, and the poor creature's teeth chattered as he made some inaudible plea.

"I can't hear you," said the man in tweeds. "Come in here. You're half frozen." And he would have led him into the sleeper, but found that the snap-latch was set,—that he had locked himself out. Still clinging to his prisoner, he led on into the rear door of the day-coach ahead. The lights were burning blar and dim. The passengers, curled or sprawled about their seats, were sleeping as best they could. A brakeman's lantern lay on the floor at the head of the aisle, and the brakeman sat in a forward seat, half dozing, wholly unconscious of the addition to the car-load.

"Stealing a ride, I suppose?" said our traveller, presently. "Where're you trying to get to?" And with a shrug of his shoulders he glanced pityingly at his quaking captive.



"To Pawnee,—half-way over the range," was the shivering answer. "I've got a sick wife there, and was beatin' my way as well as I could——" But the poor fellow gave it up. Cold and misery and hunger were too much for him. The train was slowing up again; another prairie station,—they had them every ten or dozen miles. The brakeman shook himself, picked up his lantern, and went out in front. The party in tweeds shoved his new acquaintance into the first vacant seat, swung himself to the ground the moment the train stopped, ran back, and tapped under a rear window of the sleeper, and the sash was raised and the porter's head popped out.

"Let me in at the rear door, porter," said Tweeds. "I locked myself out."

The negro recognized the voice of his well-dressed passenger, sniffed a double fee, and jumped for the door.

"Beg pardon, suh; sorry, suh, but we has to lock these doors at night out hyuh: tramps come in 'most any time if we don't."

But the young man smiled carelessly, hastened through the car, got his flask, set the latch so that he could re-enter, and the next minute was administering a stiff drink to the rag-heap on the rear seat. Once more the man essayed to tell his story. He was penniless, he hadn't even anything left to sell, but out from an inner pocket he took an old worn card photograph and showed it to his new-found friend. "My wife and baby," said he, with a choke, "but the baby's gone,—thank God."

"Here, take another drink," said Tweeds. Then back to the smoker he went, and reappeared with some sandwiches. The train again moved on. The brakeman returned, became aware of the newcomers, and came down and curiously inspected them. The liquor, the warmth, the food, and human sympathy were restoring courage to the abject object of a few minutes before. He looked up without a quaver at the brakeman's hail, but Tweeds spoke for him. "I found this poor fellow back here a few miles half frozen, and hauled him in. He only wants to go on to Pawnee. It's all right: he can pay his fare when the conductor comes."

The brakeman went off suspiciously to hunt up his chief and report, and the conductor promptly appeared. His face grew darker at sight of the two. He held irresolutely the ten-dollar bill handed him by Tweeds, and looked from one man to the other in deep distrust. "I don't understand this," he said. "How'd you—where'd you get aboard?"

"At Willow Springs," said the tramp. "I walked there from the Junction. I'd 'a' frozen if it hadn't been for this gentleman."

"I can't change this," said the conductor. "I'll fetch it presently." And, nodding to his brakeman to follow him, he hurried up the aisle. At the forward end of the car he whispered, "Watch those two like a cat, now. I'm going forward to get the sergeant and some of his men and seat them here where they can keep an eye on that precious pair. There's fun ahead for somebody this night, but, by God, they don't catch old Bill Jarvis napping. You stay here, now, till I come."

But no sooner were they gone than the tramp began brokenly to

heap thanks and blessings on his benefactor, and the latter impatiently turned away. "That's all right," said he. "Never mind that. I'm glad to help, for I believe your story. The conductor will give you the change when he comes in. Now, good-night: I've got to turn in."

"But—say; Mister; Stranger,—hold on one minute. I—I want to pay this back—some day. How'll I know you? Where'll I send it?"

But Tweeds shook his head, waved him off, strode back to the sleeper, sprung the latch against pursuit, then half filled a glass from his flask, gulped the contents down, and reseated himself in the smoking-compartment. "That's the first man I've found in a fortnight," said he, "more miserable than I am."

With that he took some letters from his pocket, glanced them over, and tore the envelopes to shreds, sending the fragments sailing on the night. At a small card photograph in a flat Russia leather case, a portrait of a laughing girlish face, he gazed lingeringly, then returned it to an inner pocket. "No one would know it now," he muttered. Next he lifted from his card-case a dozen or more pasteboards that bore in plain, heavy script the words "Mr. Darcy Hunter Gray," ripped them into shreds, and sent them flying. As calmly and methodically he searched through every pocket for every scrap of paper, bills or billet-doux, anything that could tend to establish his identity; glanced dubiously at the monogram on the back of his watch; scraped the lettering out of the crown of his hat; took a fountain-pen from his pocket and some paper and envelopes from his satchel; wrote with infinite difficulty, owing to the swaying of the car, two brief notes which he enclosed and stowed under the flap of his bag, then once more glanced at his watch. It was two forty-five, and No. 783 was whistling for Boulder Creek. At last they were out of the valley. Now for the climb up the divide.

"One cigar," he muttered. "I let the other go out." His match-box had disappeared. He tried one pocket after another, without result. Neither was there one to be had in the compartment. The train had stopped, and he could hear footsteps on a wooden platform and the muffled voices of men. Tiptoeing through the long, dim, curtain-bordered aisle, he was suddenly checked. Out from a narrow opening between the curtains of the second section came a slender little white hand, holding a silver travelling-cup, and a soft voice, silvery as the cup, murmured, "Oh, porter, would you kindly get me some water?" Mr. Gray took the cup, filled it, restored it with a bow to the unseen occupant, watched the lily-white hand, with its few treasures of rings, slip back between the folds, then aroused the porter, proffered his request for matches, and asked if there was any possibility of the ladies being incommoded by his smoking.

"No, suh, not a bit, suh. They can't smell it when you stay in the smoking-room. There's only two ladies in the car, suh. Both going up to Butte,—Mrs. Mainwaring and a young lady with her."

"Know her name?"

"No, suh, I don't, suh. The lady with her calls her Pet mos' the time."

Mr. Gray once more returned to his compartment, lighted his cigar, and seated himself in the corner by the open window. The train still lay at the station. Voices still echoed among the dingy wooden buildings, and a light or two flickered about the platform. The conductor's voice was presently heard. He was interrogating the station-agent, and Gray, seated close to the open casement, couldn't help hearing.

"Both took tickets to Pawnee?"

"Yes, both. Left their horses here in Hank's stable and took supper. No, they haven't been drinking at all."

Mr. Jarvis lowered his voice. He was talking eagerly, but only the answer was audible.

"Oh, of course; cowboys always are. Each has his revolver and knife. But you'll see 'em for yourself: they're in the smoking-car."

"Sure nobody knew 'em around here?"

"Certain. They said they'd never been here before."

Mr. Jarvis waved his lantern. "Well, we've got to go," said he, "but you keep your eyes and ears open, and wire after us. I suppose it's all right about No. 12," he shouted, as he swung on the platform.

The station-agent's voice followed them out into the night.

"She's coming along all right. Suppose you'll meet her at the Gap. She's due there at three ten."

"Due there in five minutes," thought Mr. Gray to himself, as he meditatively puffed at his fine havana, "and by good rights I should have been sleeping the sleep of the just and innocent hours ago." The train soon seemed laboring in a heavy sea. The hoarse panting of the engine came throbbing back on the night. The huge Pullman rolled deep, first to one side awhile, then to the other, as it trailed on around the sharp reverse curves of some unseen grade. Out of the darkness to the right and against the northern stars loomed up dim, bulky shapes, and Gray realized that the foot-hills were reached, that the long tortuous climb was beginning. Up, up, higher and higher steamed the straining giant in the lead, the dense smoke-clouds rolling rearward lighted brilliantly every few seconds by the glare from the roaring furnace into which Scut's shovel was heaping coal by the bushel. No. 783 was doing her best, as Long predicted, but even her superb lungs and tempered muscles could barely drag so heavy a burden. Only nine or ten miles an hour was she making now, thought Gray, as once more the sleeper door was opened, and the conductor, followed by a brakeman, bustled in. He glared suspiciously into the dim recess of the smoking-compartment, the brakeman peering over his shoulder.

"Ain't you going to bed to-night?" he asked.

"Presently," yawned Gray, "if I get sleepy."

"Your friend there in the other car hasn't lost much time. He's snoring like he hadn't slept for six weeks. Where'd he say he lived?"

"Pawnee."

"Know him—there?"

"No, nor anybody else."

"Never been out here before?"

Gray was in no mood for talk, much less for cross-examination. He shrugged his broad shoulders impatiently. "Never."

The conductor hesitated, looked long and fixedly at his passenger, studying what he could see of his face, figure, and clothes in that dim light. He turned half reluctantly away, then turned back.

"Well, if you want any sleep before we get to Butte you'd better be getting it," said he, with that broad freedom of manner and absence of conventional restraint begotten of years in the boundless West, and then stood awaiting the result.

It came, not too soothingly or satisfactorily.

"When I want it, I'll take it."

The conductor drew away with distinct sense of another defeat. He stirred up the porter with no gentle touch. "How many of your passengers have got guns?" he asked.

The negro started from his seat, dazed and frightened. "Only two or three of 'em, that I see," was the answer. "That officer in lower 3, and two gentlemen in 8 and 9. What's the matter?"

"Nothing as yet, but I've a good mind to wake the lieutenant," said Jarvis, his fingers working nervously, as he glanced about the car. The porter's eyes were big, his eyeballs staring.

"Wait till I come back," said Mr. Jarvis, presently, and let himself out at the rear door. The last sleeper was dark and silent. Every curtain seemed drawn. Jarvis found his bunch of keys, and after a few seconds' fumble opened the door. The air within was close, almost stifling, for every section was occupied. He found the porter snoring in the smoking-room, stirred him vigorously, and propounded rapid questions. The bewildered dandy answered to the point. Some of the young men among his excursionists might have pistols in their grips, but he'd only seen one in a hip pocket. There were ten ladies and twelve men, he said, all unconscious of danger of any kind, and, as it was a chartered car and they were out for a long pleasure-trip, no doubt there was plenty of money, to say nothing of watches and jewelry, in the party. It was the first of the kind that had come up the road for a month. Jarvis knew it had been well advertised. What more likely than that the daring fellows who had made things lively on the other road should have planned to hold up this particular train? What better place could they select than the lonely, rugged, almost mountainous tract between Thunder Gap and Boulder Creek? And if they weren't already boarding his train, one or two at a time, just as they did on the K. P., then call him a Chinaman. That swagger and stylish young man at the Junction, "salooning the soldiers and making himself solid with them," the shivering tramp at Willow Springs who was so promptly found and so lavishly paid for and provided for by the same suspicious party ("Fancy his enlisting!" thought the conductor: "that cock-and-bull story that he told Long was enough to damn him from the start"), and now these two cowboys in the smoker,—fellows that took supper and left their plugs at Hank's and said they were going up to Pawnee for a flyer, but allowed

they knew nobody there, or in that part of the valley. Jarvis felt more uneasy with every minute.

"I'm blessed if I don't think I ought to wake some of the likeliest of these young fellows," said he to the porter; "but I'll go and have out the lieutenant anyhow."

Suiting action to the word, back he went to the forward sleeper. "Wake the gentleman in No. 3," said he to the porter, as he re-entered, and found that dusky guardian eagerly, anxiously awaiting him.

"He's gittin' up, suh. I done called him." And at the moment, rubbing a pair of bleary, sleepy, red-rimmed eyes with one hand and buttoning a cavalry sack-coat with the other, a stocky, heavily built man of about thirty-five came lurching down the aisle. Briefly the conductor told his suspicions and asked what help he could have in case of trouble. The cavalryman was evidently a trifle hard to rouse. He seemed slow of comprehension. He pondered a bit, looking dumbly from the conductor to the porter, with eyes that did not clear as rapidly as they should have done. At last he said,—

"One of them in this car?"

"Yes, smoking in the compartment yonder."

Following the conductor, the officer meandered up the aisle. The Pullman was swaying violently now. The train had reached the summit of the divide and was rushing down the westward slope at a speed that became swifter every moment. The lieutenant stopped at his berth and rummaged under a pillow.

"You're not getting a gun now?" whispered the conductor, warningly.

"No,—only a pocket pistol," was the answer, as the blue blouse straightened up and produced a half-filled flask.

"I wish your men, those recruits, had arms," muttered the conductor, as they went on again. Then he held up a warning hand. They were just squeezing through the narrow passage between the smoking-compartment and the side of the car. "Wait till I see what he's doing," said Jarvis, and disappeared around the corner. Presently he beckoned, and, flask in hand, the lieutenant followed on, glancing casually at the dim form near the window, stepped to the wash-stand and found a tumbler, half filled it with liquor, and proffered it to the conductor, who shook his head. The soldier poured in a little water, and swallowed it all at a gulp.

"Now," said he, "let's have a look at your man."

The conductor stepped inside the smoker, feigning to try to decipher the writing on a card he held in his hand, but, as though the light were too dim, reached up and turned higher the flame, brightly illuminating the little compartment in a moment. Gray may have been dozing. He glanced quickly up, as though startled, and his eyes met those of the stout man in cavalry uniform. For a moment they looked at each other, searchingly and without a word. A flush as of surprise and annoyance began to mount to the civilian's face; a flush that was not of surprise was already manifest on that of the soldier. The conductor glanced from one to the other as though about to speak.

Suddenly the night was rent by one sharp, quick, almost agonized

shriek from the engine, far ahead. Suddenly, so suddenly that it almost hurled Jarvis and the lieutenant off their feet, the air-brakes gripped like a vice, the whizzing wheels instantly checking their way, the smooth, swift motion changed to a jerky, grinding, straining series of bumps. Jarvis, turning white as a sheet, sprang to the door the instant he could recover balance. For six, eight seconds the Pullman went thumping ahead, slower and slower every second, yet still at dangerous speed. Then came a thunderous shock and crash. Gray, whose feet were on the opposite seat, doubled up like a jack-knife, his nose and knees jammed together, the back seat clamped tight against that in front. The lieutenant shot forward out of sight, and was overheard fetching up with a resounding thump against the front door. There was a crackling of window-glass, a sound of stifled shrieks and groans. The big car recoiled some thirty or forty yards, then came to a stand-still, and Mr. Gray, scrambling out from the smoking-compartment, nearly stumbled over the prostrate officer, who was slowly finding his feet. But, following some half-articulate cry for help, Gray darted through the narrow passage-way, into the curtained aisle, now rapidly filling with men, much more dazed than dressed, some of them bleeding from contusions, all of them shaken and scared, and, slowly sliding out of the nearest berth, came a blue-robed, slender, senseless form,—that of the soft-voiced occupant who half an hour earlier had importuned him for water. In an instant Gray stooped, raised her in his arms, bore her through the passage, nearly capsizing the lieutenant the second time, laid her flat upon the long seat in the smoker, and applied his fine cambric handkerchief to a gash in the left temple, from which the blood was oozing.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

A MELANCHOLY scene of wreck and disaster was that which greeted the eyes of Mr. Gray when perhaps half an hour later he stepped from the platform and made his way forward. Through some strange neglect of telegraphic orders from Butte, the conductor and engineer of No. 12 had not been bidden to side-track at Thunder Gap, but had been sent spinning on their way down grade five miles to Alkali Flats, where the road crossed to the northeast and began to climb over the divide to Boulder Creek, and right here, at the end of a straight-away mile of track, the head-light of the Pacific express flashed into view. Each engineer sighted the glaring eye of the other's steed at the same instant. Each scounded his warning cry. Each instantly reversed his lever, reckless of cylinder-heads. Long had vainly sprung the air-brake, and No. 12's brakemen had spun their iron wheels for all they were worth, but still, with the fearful momentum of their down-grade rush, the two trains dashed at each other like maddened bulls, and engineer and fireman, having done all that mortal men could do, jumped for their lives a second or two before the crash. The lighter train of the two, the express, had so far slackened speed that Long and his fireman, landing and rolling in the soft sand, were but



slightly hurt. The engineer of the freight, however, was tumbled heels over head, and then knocked senseless by a flying splinter. The fireman had only just been found as Gray reached the point where the two engines, locked deep in each other's embrace, stood welded together, a tangled mass of metal. The whistle of one of them, dislocated by the shock, was emitting a low, moaning sound, as of some huge beast in agony. The tender of the express had telescoped half its length through the mail-car, and the postal clerk had been hauled from under a confused heap of coal and mail-sacks. The mail-car in turn had smashed in the front of the express, and this, forced flat against the front of the baggage-car, left the messenger a helpless prisoner within his own premises, unable to open even a side door. How the baggage-man escaped death he never could tell. He and his trunks were hurled to the front end of the car, all in a heap, yet, barring damages to clothing and cuticle, he was little the worse for the adventure. Then came the car-load of recruits. Hardly a man of their number had a whole skin left. The seats were wrenched loose, the windows were shattered. The smoker, too, was a sight: its few occupants had been hurled about promiscuously, and were still swearing when Gray got to the front. People in the day-coach were less damaged, but equally dazed, and in the two Pullmans consternation reigned supreme. The excursionists were all sound asleep up to the instant of impact, and those in the upper berths had been tumbled into the aisle, and all the car-load violently shaken. But in the forward Pullman the actual damage was greater. The porter was groaning with a twisted back. Two of the men were badly wrenched. Lieutenant Rawson had a bump as big as a grape-shot on the side of his head. Mrs. Mainwaring, though uninjured, was so terrified as to be worse than helpless, and as for the fair girl with her, she had happened to be awake, had lifted herself on her elbow at the shriek of the whistle, fearful of ill, and almost instantly had been dashed against the edge of the seat and cruelly stunned. Of the freight train, the six cars immediately behind the engine were crushed to fragments, and the fragments hurled far and wide. It was from under a heap of these they lugged the fireman as Gray appeared, and this summed up the damage to person and material, but not to nerves, tempers, or records for piety. The language of Mr. Jarvis and his friend of the freight train begged description. The cavalry sergeant felt an access of envious respect as he listened. Lieutenant Rawson invited both to have a drink, and this time it was accepted.

It was a five-mile stretch up to the Gap, and much more than that back to Boulder, but news of the mishap had to be sent and help summoned. It was then that Gray's shabby tramp had come to the fore. He had been warmed, fed, and rested, as he had not been for a week. He was used to walking, he said, and offered to carry the conductor's pencilled despatch. It should have been sent by a brakeman of the freight, but both were lamed and badly bruised. Jarvis looked more than uncertain at first, but finally gave the man the important paper. Twenty minutes later, the two cowboys, despite bangs and bruises, declared that they too would "hoof it," and pushed ahead through the

pallid dawn. Gray, silent and observant, appeared just as they departed, and found the lieutenant, the two conductors, and the cavalry sergeant in a quadrangular council. At sight of the new-comer Jarvis cautioned silence, and dissolved the meeting.

The girl whom Gray had so promptly and tenderly cared for had recovered consciousness within five minutes. She looked up, dazed and startled, into the strange face bending over her, and then almost instantly asked for Mrs. Mainwaring.

"She is unhurt," said Gray, quietly. "Don't worry. You have quite a bruise here on the side of your head. Please lie still until I check the bleeding. Mrs. Mainwaring will be back in a moment."

Mrs. Mainwaring had been there, half distracted, wringing her hands and laughing and crying by turns, and was now lying in her berth, being ministered to by some sympathetic woman from the other car. Another had come to aid Gray, but, seeing how deftly he bathed and stanching the wound, she confined her attentions to wetting towels and passing them to the strange gentleman. So skilful were his ministrations that the young lady presently declared herself able to sit up and walk, and insisted on seeing Mrs. Mainwaring. She was assisted to her feet, and, leaning on his arm, was taken to her friend. Gray left her there, slipped quietly away, and came forth, his heart beating with odd emotion.

The next thing he found to do was to help straighten out the fireman of the freight, who was shaking like an aspen, completely demoralized and almost crying. He, too, had struck soft sand when he leaped from the train, but after a somersault or two had been buried under an avalanche of splintered board, distributed from the roofs, sides, and flooring of the shattered cars. The heavy trucks, wheels, and beams fortunately had not been hurled more than a dozen yards from the track, but kindling-wood in distracting quantities had been showered far and near. The handsome silver-topped flask, so admired of the sergeant at the Junction, was promptly produced, and the fireman took a long, long pull. Then Gray bethought him of his tramp. The recruits and passengers mingling in confused knot with the damaged men were still grouped about the wreck, some detailing personal impressions and experiences, some noisy and nervous, others silent and doubtless thankful for their escape, others still thinking only of the injured. Of these latter was Gray, at whom the conductor was scowling suspiciously the while, and saying something in a low tone to the lieutenant.

"Do you know what became of that poor fellow we picked up at Willow Springs?" asked Gray of the brakeman, who was ruefully contemplating a ruined lantern. The man looked up instantly, but, instead of answering, turned and glanced significantly at the conductor.

"If you want him," said the latter, coolly, "you'll have to follow the track five miles or more. Perhaps you knew the two that went after him. Birds of a feather, I take it,—bound for the Gap and a spree on what's left of that ten-dollar bill."

"I'm very glad to hear he isn't hurt," said Gray. "You've sent for help, I presume?"

"I've sent a message by that tramp friend of yours, if that's what you mean. None of my crew or the freight could walk a mile."

All this time Lieutenant Rawson stood aloof, his forage-cap pulled down over his brows, intently eying the stylishly dressed man in tweeds. Gray became conscious of the scrutiny, and it annoyed him. Of the passengers in the day-coach none were men whom he would have been at all likely to meet on equal terms in his past. Among those of the forward sleeper only two or three appeared to be men of education or social standing, and they were nursing their bruises back in the lavatory. The young fellows of the rear Pullman were laughing and chatting noisily together as they rummaged about the wreck. The officer was the one man aboard the train whom ordinarily Gray would have felt inclined to address. But while the uniform and the assurance of at least a certain social standing on the part of its wearer attracted him, there was that in Rawson's face which repelled. Nor was this wholly due to the fact that it lacked refinement and was a trifle bloated,—that the eyes were somewhat dull and clouded; but in them Gray read unerringly an expression of distrust, even of hostility, and the pugnacious in him was aroused at once.

All of a sudden he recalled that the porter had told him Mrs. Mainwaring was an army lady; so, doubtless, was the young lady with her. Very possibly the lieutenant was their escort, and the escort was wrathful over his usurpation of an escort's functions, so far as the damsel was concerned. Gray could not remember the officer's busying himself in any way to aid Mrs. Mainwaring. True, he was still half stunned, and was bathing his bruises, while Gray was caring for the very attractive if somewhat dishevelled girl in the pale-blue wrapper. Something in the contemplation of his loneliness and isolation during the earlier night—a man without a home, the would-be sharer of the fireman's seat, the companion of the rude soldiery, the aider and abettor of tramps—and the exaltation of his present, tickled his sense of the humorous. Had he not won the gratitude, the almost effusive thanks, of Mrs. Mainwaring, the eloquent, if silent, recognition of a very pretty girl, and now the undoubted jealousy and dislike of an army officer? "There's some fun left in life, even now," was his grim comment, as he calmly studied Rawson's reddening face, gazing speculatively into the latter's shifting eyes until uneasily they turned away.

The gray dawn was sheeting the slopes about them, and farther to the west the mountain-tops loomed, dim, pallid, and white with snow. Fine, soft flakes were sifting down even here, and Long's prediction was being verified. That faithful soldier of his country and "the Road" was now stretched on the flat of his back on the floor of the baggage-car, with some car-seats for mattress, pluckily stifling the moan of pain that would have forced itself through his set teeth. To him came the younger soldier, the sergeant, full of sympathy.

"You're badly shaken, Mr. Long: wouldn't a little whiskey help you?" said he, the cavalry cure-all of the old days most naturally suggesting itself.

"I don't know but what it would," groaned the engineer. "The lieutenant has some, hasn't he?"

"Yes, *he* has," was the half-hesitant reply. Then the freemasonry of the craft seemed to show in the look that followed, half comical, half confiding, but all significant. "But—he ain't the sort of man I'd ask for anything. 'Tain't like as if it was Captain Ray or Blake or Truscott or any of them was here, you know. But—I can find you some all right."

And, jumping from the car, Sergeant Kearney went straight to Mr. Gray. "Our engineer, sir," said he, "is badly stove up. Could you oblige me with a little whiskey?"

"Certainly," said Gray, going down into his pocket and fishing up the silver-topped flask. "Give him a good swig, and, sergeant, help yourself."

The sergeant grinned, thanked him, hurried back to his new friend, and gave him what he called an honest cavalry four fingers.

"God!" said Long, smacking his lips, his eyes snapping. "That was an old-timer." Then, as the potent liquor, long a stranger to his once casehardened system, began glowingly to assert itself, he blinked his gratitude and looked admiringly at the handsome flask. "That's a swell stopper you've got to that canteen, sergeant. Where'd you capture it?"

"Tall young fellow in the first sleeper. Seems to have money and whiskey, cigars and good nature, till you can't rest," said Kearney, in the vernacular of the day, and was surprised at Long's sudden interest. The engineer braced himself up on an elbow, all eagerness.

"Smooth face, with light moustache, regular six-footer, slim, broad-shouldered, travelling-cap and big ulster?"

"That's the feller. Treated half my squad to pie and coffee back there at the Junction. No end of a swell, I—— Why, what's amiss? Say, I wouldn't take another drink just now, would you?" he broke off, anxiously, for Long was reaching for the flask.

"I want to see the monogram, or whatever you call it, on that silver stopper. D'ye know what I think of that feller? He's first-cousin or twin brother to the foxiest gang of bank- and train-robbers in the whole country, and if we hadn't run over or run our nose slap into No. 12 right here at Alkali Flats, I'm betting my bottom dollar we'd have found his gang waiting for us back of Thunder Gap."

Kearney drew back, startled. Long had seized the flask, and was studying the stopper with keen interest. No wonder he couldn't decipher it. There was no monogram. Instead there was a queer-shaped shield with diagonal lines and odd little figures, like tiny leaves, cut on the surface, and above it was the paw of an animal grasping a dagger, and there was a scroll with some words in a foreign tongue, Long knew not what. He searched the cup of silver that fitted on the base, but that was smooth and polished. The red Russia leather covering also bore no mark.

"That don't look like a train-robber," said Kearney, pointing to the device on the top of the stopper. "Ain't that what you call a coat of arms, or something?"

"Exactly; and what's an American doing with a coat of arms? He's lifted it from some dook or other, touring through the West for buffalo and Indians. He's a slick one, sergeant, but he can't fool me. Why, he just gave himself dead away when he told me he wanted to ride up with me and Scout in the cab, pretending he was out here to enlist in the cavalry and wanted to talk with me about the officers that were coming there to Ransom. Yes, sir." And Long grinned sardonically, despite his pain.

Kearney's answer was a long whistle of amazement.

"You'd never have got me to believe it if he hadn't made that break. Fancy a swell like him a-grooming horses and cleaning out stalls. Hush," suddenly lowering his voice, for at the instant Mr. Gray came briskly into the car.

The dawn was so far advanced that the night-lights were no longer needed and were burning blar and dim. The battered baggage-man, in no pleasant humor, because an excursionist from the rear Pullman, with ill-timed jocularly, had asked him how he liked the taste of his own medicine, was muttering profane comment on excursionists in general and this one in particular, as he took down the nearest lamp and extinguished it. Gray's tall figure, bereft now of the ulster, was outlined against the brighter light at the rear door as he entered, and Long turned his head and stared at him curiously. For a moment, coming as he did from the outer air where it was now almost broad daylight, though the sun was not yet peeping over the eastern horizon, the new-comer was not quite sure whether the dark object on the floor was or was not the engineer, but he spoke cheerily.

"I'm looking for Mr. Long," he said. "I hear he's badly wrenched. Ah, there you are. How are you feeling?"

"As well as a man can who's turned half a dozen somersaults in the mud. You can thank God you didn't get aboard the cab."

"I can indeed," laughed Gray. "I've never practised mounting and dismounting at a gallop from a locomotive, though I've tried it often enough from my horse."

Mr. Long winked expressively at Kearney, as though he would say, "Now watch out for a lie," and promptly popped the question.

"So you thought you'd join the cavalry on that account, did you?"

And, to the amazement of Sergeant Kearney and the incredulous disdain of Mr. Long, the calm reply was, "That's what I'm going to Butte for. I expect to be at squad drill in a day or two. Possibly the sergeant here will be giving me my setting up," said he, turning frankly and smilingly to Kearney.

"You talk as though you knew the drill already, sir," said the sergeant, still unable to credit the statement, yet powerless against the gay, frank good humor of the civilian; "and it isn't the likes of you that generally take a blanket."

"Oh, I used to shoulder arms in the militia," laughed Gray, "and do the four exercises, but I'm green as any recruit in your party, as you'll probably find out, if you're going to Ransom."

Kearney looked at Long, and Long glared at Kearney. This was simply too brazen a fraud for the engineer's patience.

"Do you mean to tell me a man who wears clothes like them and carries a flask like this can't find any easier way of making a living?" said he.

"Positive fact," laughed Gray, debonair as before. "I'm at the end of my tether, or soon will be, and I've come all the way out here for no other purpose."

"Why didn't you save your money and 'list in the East, where you came from?" asked Long, prodding Kearney with his toe to call attention to his astuteness.

"For the simplest of reasons. Had I enlisted there they might have sent me to any regiment, whereas I wanted a particular one,—the —th, in fact."

Long had lost another point, but rallied. His tone was gruff as Mainwaring's as he returned to the attack: "One would suppose a feller—a man like you could command influence enough to get assigned to any regiment he wanted. That ain't much of a trick."

"No," answered Gray, as he seated himself on the conductor's big wooden chest and carelessly swung his slender foot; "no, I don't believe I've got either friends or influence, or anything in the wide world, but—what I've got on and what's in an old trunk somewhere along the road here."

"Didn't you say something about quitting railroading to take up soldiering?" queried Long, so astonished that he was forgetting his pain.

"I did. Two years ago I did some railroading at the general manager's end of the line. So you see how little I must have known about it. Yes," he went on, with twinkling eyes, "I used to ride my own horse, but I've lost him, so it's got to be one of Uncle Sam's."

For a moment nothing further was said. A pair of frank blue eyes were gazing smilingly down into the engineer's face, and that extrooper could find no excuse for another expression of doubt. Slowly he held forth the half-emptied flask.

"Here," said he, "take this. I'm damned if you're not too many for me. But," a sudden thought striking him, "why don't you sell this and your watch and them clothes and go to the mines and make a stake there?"

"Because I'd rather soldier, man," was the smiling answer,—Gray's good humor was indomitable,—“and down in the bottom of your heart you know perfectly well you never see the uniform,” and here he laid a hand on Kearney's shoulder, “that you don't more than half wish you were in it again and riding the trail or the prairie rather than the iron track. I don't have to sell anything yet,” he added, with almost a laugh. “Keep the whiskey, Mr. Long. You've more need of it than I have. I'll see you again after a while.” And with that he rose, and, nodding smilingly to Kearney, sauntered from the car.

“Well, if that's a train-robber,” said the latter, as he reached and took the flask from Long's unresisting hand, “here's”—the top came off and the flask was lifted to his lips—“here's long life to him.”

Late that morning the relief train came down from Pawnee, the East-bound express at its heels. Passengers and baggage were labo-



riously transferred from one train to the other around the scene of the wreck. Mr. Long, bidding mournful adieu to No. 783, asked Sergeant Kearney to see that the now empty flask was returned to the tall feller that talked of enlisting. "He may talk till hell freezes over," said Long, "but not till I see him in uniform will I believe he isn't lying, and even then I'll misdoubt him for a reformed train-robber or an escaped lunatic."

But of this and other unflattering comments Mr. Gray was unconscious. By eight o'clock some railway-men arrived from the Gap on a hand-car, proving that the suspected tramp had at least delivered his despatches. People were getting hungry by that time, and it presently transpired that "the tall gent" in the first sleeper was going back with the hand-car to see what he could buy and send to them, as it would be noon perhaps before the wrecking-train, etc., could come. Then the porter addressed Mr. Gray with a message. Mrs. Mainwaring begged to see the gentleman before he started.

She was calm and collected now, and evidently ashamed of the trouble she had given. The young lady was seated by an open window, languidly drinking in the fresh air, a silken handkerchief bound about her head.

"We are so very much indebted to you," said the matron, rising at the entrance of the young man, "and both my niece, Miss Leroy, and I wished to thank you before we parted. I am Mrs. Mainwaring, and my husband, Major Mainwaring, whom I expect to meet to-day, will be glad to add his thanks to mine, if you will kindly give me your address."

"I assure you the thanks are unnecessary. I am only too happy to have been of the faintest service. I am awfully clumsy, I fear," said Gray, smiling, as his eyes wandered to Miss Leroy's face. She was leaning forward now and extending the pretty white hand he had so admired much earlier that morning.

"And I want to say, yet I don't know how to say, how very much I thank you," she murmured, her words falling hesitatingly, "and—Pray, do not think me impertinent, but did I not see you—were you not on the Rhine last May?"

His whole manner seemed to change instantly. Quiet good humor and courtesy gave place to embarrassment, even awkwardness.

"It was—possibly a brother of mine," he faltered. "I—I hope you'll have a very pleasant journey. Such ill luck thus far, you know—" He barely touched the extended hand. "Good-by. Good-by, Mrs. Mainwaring. They—they're waiting for me with that hand-car." And in an instant he was hastening away.

"But you haven't told us your name or your address," persisted the elder lady.

"Oh, it's of no consequence.—You remember Mr. Toots, don't you?" he called back over his shoulder, as he made his escape from the car. But on the platform without the flitting smile vanished, and his face grew gray and sad, as he stopped and took a long, long breath.

"Lesson number one, and a tough one, Darcy, my boy," he panted. "My God, what is my name to be now?"

## CHAPTER V.

THE —th had been having what Captain Ray called a "poky" time most of that year, and when Ray's usually sunny nature clouded over something was sure to be amiss with the professional side of the man. His domestic side was perennial joy. The regiment had known many a hard winter, many a fierce summer, many a sharp campaign and savage battle. Its long exile in Arizona in the old days was full of peril and suffering. Its sometimes desperate encounters with the red warriors of the northern plains and mountains had made sad inroads on its membership. Its records of casualties embraced every conceivable catastrophe: death by sunstroke, starvation, freezing, lightning, flood, fire, rattlesnakes, explosions, thirst, arrow and tomahawk, shot, sabre, and shell. A peaceful year it never knew from the day of its first muster on the plains of Texas until a quarter-century after, when, *mirabile dictu*, there hadn't even been a horse-thief to follow or an Indian to chase until, late in the summer, it occurred to a band of Cheyennes to ride northward and call on some kindred up in the Powder River country, and these children of nature never thought of asking anybody's leave. The —th had been having, as Ray said, so poky a time at Russell—just drilling, drilling, drilling on that wide sweep of upland prairie, instead of scouting and fighting through the mountains, their normal summer recreation—that the regiment shouted for very joy when it heard that Sharp-Knife, the young Hotspur that headed the raid, had soundly thrashed the first detachment sent to head him off, and, indignant at the discourtesy of the Great Father in essaying to curb his inclination to roam, was helping himself to all the horned cattle, horses, and household goods that lay in his way, not to mention a few of the households, and was careering onward bound for a big time in the Big Horn Mountains, bragging to the Northern Cheyennes of the fun he had had.

Then away went Colonel Atherton, with Stannard and Mainwaring, the old and the new majors, and eight "husky" troops, full tilt for the Hills, only to find when they reached the broad valley of the Ska that Sharp-Knife and his shifty followers had crossed forty-eight hours ahead and were circling westward across the Little Missouri by that time. Never is a stern chase so long a chase as when the Indian has the lead. The department commander followed by rail, stage-coach, and buckboard, and half the troops in the Territories of Dakota, Montana, and Wyoming were centring on the Cheyennes, when Sharp-Knife cut loose from all semblance of a base and took to the woods in earnest. His people scattered to the four winds. Some hid among the northern bands of the same tribe, some slipped in among the Sioux at the great reservations in Dakota, others scattered far and wide, broke up into little squads of three or four and even less, and jogged back by circuitous routes to the southern plains and swore they'd only been hunting along the Arkansas. There's only one creature that can beat an Indian,—murder one minute and look the image of piety the next,—and that's a cat. It was "a poky summer," said Ray, at Russell. It was poor kind of campaigning, said that same authority, but

better than none. It was the move that followed that stirred the social fabric of the —th to its foundations. The regiment had been stationed for some years at Russell, a big post on the Union Pacific, but the department commander decided that he wanted Atherton and his seasoned campaigners closer to the malcontents, and, to the unspeakable—not speechless—indignation of nine-tenths of the ladies in the —th and the financial, though unconfessed, comfort of many of their lords, the order was issued that it should not return to Russell, but direct its retrograde march on the older, smaller, but just now rather more important post of Fort Ransom.

"Squeeze into quarters as best you can," said the general, cheerfully, "and you won't mind crowding this winter. We'll fit you out better in the spring."

Now, the winter was the time they most objected to being crowded, for then they had their friends from the East and their social pleasures, did these dames and damsels of the army, while in summer the troops were almost always afield, and the women, those who could afford it, went East. Few had done so this year, because the regiment was not sent out for summer camp, and when the Sharp-Knife chase was ordered it was too late in the season.

So the two battalions, then so called, marched in to Ransom. Then, so many at a time, the officers were allowed to go to Russell to supervise the packing and shipment of their household goods, while the quartermaster and other sergeants did as much for the companies. Mrs. Atherton, with her lares and penates, was there at Butte to welcome the regiment when it arrived. Mrs. Mainwaring, with her fair niece, Miss Leroy, was to have been there, but, as we have seen, became involved in a collision in the mountain division. The major hurried eastward to meet his helpmate at Pawnee, and there got full details of the crash, and sought among the passengers for the young man in the ulster and travelling-cap who had been so helpful in time of need, but he had disappeared, said the conductor who took Mr. Jarvis's load. The last seen of him he was taking dinner at Ford's restaurant with a couple of cowboys and a dilapidated party who had been fellow-passengers with him on No. 3 at the time of the wreck. Then the cowboys had gone one way and the young man another. Sergeant Kearney, who under Lieutenant Rawson was in charge of the recruits, said, begging the new major's pardon, that the conductor and engineer of No. 3 were sure there was something queer about that party. It was believed they were all connected with a gang of train-robbers. Whereat the major scoffed until Rawson came up and corroborated what Kearney had said, and was presented by the major to his wife and Miss Leroy, who were not over-cordial. Women learn so much more about their fellow-passengers in the course of a few hours than do men. Then the major, in his happy way, went on to chaff the wife of his bosom upon her having nearly captured a train-robber, and then Miss Leroy spoke her mind. She didn't believe a word of it.

At Butte, where they arrived late at night, while the major was bustling about after the ambulance and baggage-wagons, Mrs. Main-

wareing, sitting at an open window and gazing out at the fitting lights on the platform and awaiting the summons to leave the car, was suddenly attracted by the sight of a little detachment of recruits marching by. The young lady, too, was at a near window, and the sergeant, catching a glimpse of her face, remembered the conversation he had heard at Pawnee and her prompt defence of the absent, and he had felt ill at ease and shame-stricken ever since. What right had he to brand a man as a criminal on the mere suspicion of some railway employees? The young lady's spirited stand in defence of the defamed had astonished the major and delighted Kearney. A sudden thought struck the honest trooper, as he was marching by, and, springing quickly to the side of the car, he held up to the window the handsome silver-topped flask. "I beg pardon," said he, "but this belongs to that young gentleman. I was to have given it to him, but I've got to return to St. Louis to the recruiting dépôt, and he's stopped back there about Pawnee. He never came on this train at all, but he declared he was coming up to Fort Ransom later. Would you please give it to him, miss?"

And, before she knew what to say, the sergeant was gone, and there she sat with the stranger's flask in her gloved hand,—the stranger whom she could have sworn she saw at Bonn and Cologne not four months before,—who thought it might have been his brother, who wouldn't give his name, but who had forgotten the handkerchief with which he had stanchd the flow of blood from her temple,—an unsightly relic at the moment, to be sure, but safely stowed in her little satchel for all that, and already searched, and not vainly, for a trace of ownership. Bathed in her own blood were the letters D. H. G.

And what on earth she was to do with that handsome flask and that once more presentable handkerchief was a problem that confronted Miss Leroy two weeks later, after she had begun to feel reasonably at home at Ransom. It was the queerest phase of life that ever she had encountered. City-bred, convent-educated, she found frontier ways at an army post as full of novelty and sensation as her first explorations in foreign parts. For two or three days they had lived at the hotel in Butte until the major reported the carpets down and the stoves up. The next two or three were devoted to unpacking furniture, pictures, glass, and crockery, and putting everything where it belonged and much where it didn't. It seemed to make little difference, for in all these functions, at all hours of the day, and not a few of the night, the young officers, in shirt-sleeves and the best of spirits, bore willing part. Such gay good humor, such utter lack of stiffness and conventionality, she had never seen. All drills and duties, it seemed, except the necessary guard, police, and stables, were suspended until officers and men were comfortably housed and settled down. The bachelor lieutenants pitched tents on the parade and placidly awaited their turn to choose quarters, a ceremony which impressed Miss Leroy as something incomprehensible. It was not easy to make her realize just why Captain Ray couldn't move Mrs. Ray and the baby boys up from the hotel until Captain Freeman had chosen, and why Mrs. Blake should remain at Cheyenne near her own old home until the

Truscotts and Rays had settled on what houses they would take. (They wanted the big double brick next but one to the colonel's, but were afraid to move in, lest the new surgeon ordered out from Omaha should take a fancy to that very set.) It was all plain sailing, as she could see, for the colonel, the two majors, and the two senior captains, but then came the tug of war. The Greggs had moved into No. 5, confident the doctor would prefer the other side of the garrison, the very house the Truscotts and Rays thought to occupy together, but the doctor came, saw, and concluded that the house he and Mrs. Doctor wanted was No. 5 and no other, whereat Mrs. Gregg was furious, and the captain philosophic. "I told you so, M'riar," he was unfeeling enough to say a dozen times a day, until she flew to the Stannards for sympathy. It seemed to Miss Leroy that whether these families got settled or not the feuds never would be; and yet in less than ten days even the young married couples were snugly stowed away. Smiles and sunshine met her on every side. The men, who looked like hairy monsters at first, had shaved their beards and donned their neatly fitting uniforms. The band played every afternoon. Parades were fine, guard-mounting "lovely." The little dinners and suppers and dances were just as jolly, friendly, and delightful as could possibly be. Many of the young matrons were charming companions. Several of the young officers danced divinely, all of them rode well, and none of them thought anything of coming banging at the hall door at any hour of the day to ask Mrs. Mainwaring to come and do this or Miss Leroy to come and see that. The ladies ran in and out from house to house as though it were one big family, and before the 10th of November came Miss Leroy found herself completely carried away by the life and swing and movement that seemed to characterize everything that went on in the old regiment. She was on the pleasantest of terms with Mesdames Ray, Truscott, and Blake. She found her aunt tireless as a hostess. She admired the colonel and his accomplished wife. She "took" to Mrs. Stannard from the start, and wondered why Mrs. Mainwaring didn't enthuse over her as everybody else did. She liked bluff old Stannard and most of the officers thoroughly, and so, blithe, busy, "on the go," as they said, from morn till late at night, she had well-nigh ceased to think of the shock she had sustained on the night of the collision or to speculate about the tall young gentleman who had restored her to consciousness and to whom she had not restored the handkerchief and flask, when the 10th of November came, and with it her birthday, a new sensation, and an excitement at the fort.

The recruits brought to Ransom by Lieutenant Rawson were for distribution to those troops of the regiment most in need of new blood, and, as luck would have it, these were all of the battalion at Fort Fred Winthrop, an outlying post close to the now crowded reservation of the Sioux. Thither had Atherton ordered Rawson without delay of a day, partly because recruits were needed, but mainly because the lieutenant showed symptoms of an oncoming attack of a bibulous character, and Atherton would have none of that in his garrison. Rawson was ordered northward forthwith, and marched with his



Johnny Raws at dawn next day, and, except for the voice of one crying in the wilderness that the party had looted the groggery of Laramie Pete at the Dry Fork of the Ska, nothing more was heard of them till they joined at Winthrop, none the worse for their wintry march. Ray had looked over the array and decided that he could afford to wait and pick for himself. Sergeant Kearney had gone back to the recruiting dépôt. The regimental adjutant had been designated as recruiting officer at the station, and had disdainfully rejected, one after another, half a dozen seedy-looking tramps, when one day, perhaps the fifth after their arrival at the post, the sergeant-major put his handsome head into the office, followed it in, carefully shut the door behind him, stood scrupulously at attention, and hemmed behind his hand to attract his superior's notice.

Mr. Dana looked up from the tangled mass of figures at the foot of his regimental return, laid down his pen, and said, "Well?"

"Will the adjutant see a man that wants to enlist?"

"Not if he's like the lot that have been here so far."

"He isn't, sir, but I don't know about him."

"What's the matter? I haven't time to waste if he isn't good enough to suit us." And Dana glanced out along the wooden porch as though in search of the would-be trooper.

"He's good enough, I don't doubt, sir," said the sergeant-major, a half-smile breaking about the corners of his mouth, "as far as looks go; but I never knew fellows like this one to enlist that didn't have something wrong with 'em, and he says he wants to take on with Captain Ray."

"He'll take on where we see fit to put him," said Dana, with the dogmatism of the service. "Let's see the gentleman who wants to dictate where he'll go."

So the sergeant-major opened the door, jerked his head backward in encouragement to the invisible party in the outer office, and said, "Come in."

There stepped quickly into the room a young man about six feet tall, erect and athletic in build and carriage, with a fine, clear-cut, frank face, crowned with a crop of curly, close-cut, light brown hair, with very deep blue eyes, large and clear, under heavy brows, and thick, long, curling lashes, a curly blond moustache sweeping out at the ends and barely hiding the curve of his handsomely chiselled lips, chin and jaws cleanly shaved, throat powerful, open and bare, for the rolling collar of a brand-new blue flannel shirt was confined only by a loosely knotted tie of silk. The coat he wore was a sort of double-breasted pea-jacket of dark blue beaver, now thrown open in deference to the warmth of the room, but the first significant, if not suspicious, thing the young man did as he entered was to begin buttoning it throughout. Snugly fitting trousers of dark blue, belted at the waist, stout, slender, well-made shoes, and a soft black crush hat, completed his attire. As Dana looked at him in some surprise, the new-comer brought his heels together, and between him and the foremost non-commissioned officer in the —th the expert eye could hardly have told which was the more soldierly in build and carriage.



For a moment no one spoke. It was Dana who finally broke silence.

"Why—you've served before."

"Only in a militia regiment, sir."

"Where?"

"In New York City."

The adjutant had a dozen more questions on the tip of his tongue, and the visitor saw it.

"I have answered that, sir, because I presume I have to account for standing attention, but there are many questions that may occur to you that I do not wish to answer. If I may speak with Captain Ray I think I can satisfy him without going into particulars."

Dana whipped his wooden chair around and squarely confronted the speaker. That he was a man of education and social position in the past, at least, Dana saw at a glance, and just as quickly did the companion thought flash across his mind, "Another case of the prodigal son." Incredulity as to the motives of a man in enlisting in those days was not confined to the rank and file.

"Captain Ray may or may not be satisfied, but in either event, as recruiting officer of the regiment, I have to be," said the young officer, with a touch of asperity in his tone. It was not good to his ears to be told that a would-be recruit declined to answer questions.

The new-comer, far from looking disconcerted, smiled affably and frankly. His blue eyes twinkled, his white teeth gleamed. "The best-looking scapegrace that ever came to us. Confound his impudence for grinning," said Dana to himself.

"That is why I wish to speak with Captain Ray, sir," said the civilian. "He might be able to satisfy you when I, probably, could not."

"I don't know how you make that out," said Dana, curiosity betraying him into a half-argument with the applicant, which Dana very well knew was *infra dig*.

"Possibly Captain Ray will explain it," was the answer, and the serenity of the applicant remained unruffled.

"Oh, very well," said Dana, nettled in spite of his better nature. "Go see Captain Ray if you wish."

But even as he spoke the hall door opened and in burst Major Mainwaring. There is no other way of describing the major's method of entering a room. It has been said that he was blunt both in speech and in action. A soldier for years of his life, no amount of domestic polish had ever succeeded in smoothing off the rough edges of the camp. Mainwaring prided himself on being direct in everything he said and did. Men and women who knew him well knew there was a mine of genuine kindness and goodness under the rugged surface. Men and women who heard him speak for the first time declared him a brute.

"What you got here?" blurted Mainwaring, glaring at the sergeant-major and his silent companion.

"Man wants to enlist, sir," was the reply.

Now, Mainwaring was not the recruiting officer of the regiment.

He was in no wise responsible for their selection. He had been but a few months a member of the regiment himself, having, as has been explained, been promoted to it from another when Major Barry became lieutenant-colonel; but it was a peculiarity of Mainwaring's that he considered it his inalienable right to have a say in everything going on, and it wasn't so much what he said as how he said it that made it obnoxious. He scowled at the very presentable new-comer as though words were inadequate to express his disapprobation, then gruffly demanded,—

"Where you from?"

A flush went up to the forehead of the young man, and there was an instant's hesitation; then in a very quiet tone he replied, "The East."

Major Mainwaring was studying him sharply, a suspicious light in his black eyes. "Haven't I seen you before?" he presently asked, the words tumbling all over one another's heels.

"Not out here, certainly," was the tempered reply, though the blue eyes were firing up and looking squarely into the kindling black.

"Do you mean to tell me you haven't been in service before?" The major's precipitate style of questioning left barely time for answer.

But the civilian took his time and chose his words. "I do not mean to tell you—anything, sir."

For a moment Mainwaring simply glared as though he could not realize the full significance of the words.

"What in thunder do you mean by that?" he finally growled.

"Just what I have said, sir," was the reply. "Five minutes ago I wished to enlist in this regiment; now I don't. Good-day to you, gentlemen." And, to the speechless amaze of the sergeant-major, the suppressed delight of Dana, and the profane astonishment of Mainwaring, he calmly walked past the two officers, replacing his hat as he did so, stalked deliberately into the hall-way and out of the front door.

"Well, of all the chip-on-the-shoulder specimens I ever saw," loudly laughed Mainwaring, "that fellow beats the lot. What do you s'pose fired him off so? I hadn't begun to say anything to him. The man's a dash-dashed double-dashed liar, and I know it. I've seen him somewhere before, and *he* knows it, and he's afraid to show up again, and took the first excuse to get off. That man's a dash-dashed deserter, or a horse-thief, or something. He knows me, and didn't know of my promotion to this regiment or my being here. You are well rid of him, Dana. He'll never show up at Ransom again."

But he did, for just two days later Captain Ray came cheerily into the office with enlistment papers in his hand. "Dana, old boy, I've got a tip-top man to be sworn in.—This way, please, Hunter." And there at the door-way stood the applicant of two days before.

Dana glanced over the papers. "Arthur Hunter, born New York, by occupation a clerk, do hereby acknowledge to have voluntarily enlisted this sixth day of November, 188—, as a soldier in the army of the United States, etc., etc., and do solemnly swear that I am twenty-five years and seven months of age, etc., etc., and I, Arthur Hunter,

do solemnly swear that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States of America, etc., etc."

Then Dana looked up at the dark eyes and curling black moustache and animated face of one of the crack captains in the regiment, and from him to the silent, blue-eyed, and, as before, thoroughly presentable stranger, and there was embarrassment in the adjutant's face. For a moment he hesitated, then turned to the would-be recruit.

"Will you step outside a moment? I have to speak with Captain Ray."

He was instantly obeyed.

"I beg your pardon, captain," said Dana, "but I have to ask a question or two. Major Mainwaring is sure he has seen this man before, and that he is a deserter or something disreputable despite his good looks. He refused to answer for himself two days ago."

"Yes, I know," answered Ray, smilingly. "We all know how suave and encouraging the major is apt to be to strangers. It's a wonder some wild Westerner hasn't put a bullet through him. I've heard all about that interview."

"And—you're willing to take chances? You're satisfied this man's all right?"

"All right as men go, Dana. We can't expect all the 'vartues and timperance besides for thirteen dollars a month,' as Mulligan said in the Mexican war. But this applicant satisfies me that he means to serve, that he loves a horse, and can ride like a Kentuckian. I'll bet he can fight, and it's none of our business who he is, where he hails from, or why he enlisted, so long as he does his duty. Now I'm willing to take him."

And that settled it. Recruit Arthur Hunter was formally accepted as a member of the sorrel troop, took his first lesson with the curry-comb and brush without a word, and, "without turning a hair," his initiation on Buckler, the meanest brute in the stable, and rode him barebacked to water despite furious plunges and wild howls of delight from threescore trooper throats. Furthermore, Hunter accepted barrack fare without remark and barrack chaff without remonstrance, and when forty-eight hours elapsed and his captain asked him how he liked it, the new trooper clicked his heels together and said, "Better than I hoped to, sir," and then surprised that officer by a request to be allowed to be absent until next day. Etiquette required that such favors should be asked through the first sergeant in writing. The colonel's consent had also to be given, but Hunter produced in explanation a telegram received but half an hour before stables. That despatch was addressed properly to Trooper A. Hunter, Fort Ransom, and said, "Must move to-night. Will bring your things on No. 3," and it came from Pawnee.

Captain Ray looked it over in some uncertainty. "What things are these?" he asked.

"A trunk, sir, and some other property, principally clothing."

Colonel Atherton did not look over-pleased at the application of Captain Ray for permission for a new recruit to be absent over-night, but Ray was a favorite. Sergeant Merriweather was going to Butte on

pass after supper; Recruit Hunter could go with him in the post-trader's wagon. Ray felt sure of his man, and the colonel consented.

And so it happened that Merriweather's pretty wife, the invalid of a fortnight agone, was surprised by the sight of a tall, very fine-looking young man, in a new fatigue suit not yet altered to fit him, who appeared at the door-way of her little abode shortly after gun-fire and asked for the sergeant.

"He'll be here directly. Surely this must be Mr. Hunter," said she, dusting a chair and looking up at him from under her long lashes. "You'll come in and wait, won't you?" she added, invitingly. But Hunter thanked her briefly and said he'd go to the store, which he did, with her bright eyes following him in lively curiosity.

It was midnight when Sergeant Merriweather, driving in, reported his return at the guard-house and found the officer of the day and half the guard searching busily about the premises in hopes of discovering by what means two general prisoners had sawed their way out of their iron-barred room. The rest of the guard were in pursuit. It was a night of excitement and disgust for most of them, and they were all wide awake and eager for news when, at the break of day, there came galloping out from Butte the local agent of the Transcontinental, with a startling story. Train No. 3, "The Owl," the Pacific express, had been held up by robbers about an hour earlier, just east of Ska Bridge. Jimmy Long, engineer of 783, was badly shot. His fireman was killed. The robbers, nearly a dozen in number, had terrorized the train-hands, got everything there was in the safe, in the mail-car, and among the passengers in the day-coach and sleeper, and had then ridden off northwestward across the Ska. They were heading for the Dry Fork. The sheriff was trying to raise a posse in town, but it was slow work. For God's sake, couldn't the cavalry go in pursuit?

## CHAPTER VI.

A TERRITORIAL governor is not an awe-inspiring official ordinarily, but the governor of Wyoming, relieved of his valuables at the point of the pistol, was not slow in seeking redress. From Butte he wired full particulars of the robbery to the department commander, who was at Pawnee, just back from an inspection of the Sioux agencies, fifty miles to the north. The general was waiting for the East-bound train at the dépôt hotel, was aroused in an instant, and lost no time in wiring authority to Colonel Atherton to use any means in his power to head off and capture the robbers, without waiting for civil process. The news of the "hold-up" with its attendant casualties went buzzing over the post at reveille, and barely had the story reached Atherton as he stood under the flag-staff, receiving the reports of the troop commanders, when out came the telegraph operator, racing, and the colonel read the hurriedly penned lines and turned to Ray. Somehow or other, whenever any swift, hard riding had to be done, Ray and Ray's troop were the first fellows thought of.

"Let your men finish breakfast," said the colonel, "then—do your best." And he handed the dark-eyed Kentuckian the despatch.

In an hour from that time, Mrs. Ray, holding her baby boy in her arms, was gazing from the north window of her army home at some black specks on the far horizon, and little Sandy, tugging at the skirts of her pretty morning wrapper, was coaxing for mother to hold him up too. The sorrel troop were up and away, heading for Wheelan Springs, on the Laramie trail, and bets were even between Stannard and Mainwaring that "Ray would nab the outfit before sundown."

But who could that "outfit" be? Jim Long said all were masked and he recognized none. Scut, his fireman, died without a sign. Parks, the expressman declared every form unfamiliar. Jarvis, the conductor, and Ryan, a brakeman, alone could furnish anything like a clue. Two of the desperadoes were dressed like two cowboys they had had aboard the night of the collision, a fortnight back, and the leader, who was tall, slender, well dressed, with the voice and intonation of a man of education and social position, closely resembled in build a passenger who boarded the sleeper that night at the Junction and left it after the accident and went to Pawnee. The division superintendent wired to Omaha such particulars as he could give. The legal representative and certain detectives of the road were ordered to leave for the scene by first train. The sheriff at Butte had a good-sized posse in readiness by breakfast-time, and then started valiantly on the trail of Ray's troop, passing through Fort Ransom about the time that Mr. Dana was mounting guard. Other sheriff's officials went out to Minden with the division superintendent, and others still pushed on to Pawnee, up on the broad plateau, to inquire for two cowboys, a tramp, and a swell, all of whom had appeared there in company, just after the smash-up at Alkali Flats, none of whom were there now, but one of whom, the tramp, so called, looking so entirely a different man—with trimmed hair and beard and good clothes—as to have been unrecognizable had he not rashly given himself away to everybody by bragging about his exploits the night of the smash-up,—that tramp had boarded No. 3 at three thirty A.M. at Pawnee, with a ticket for Sweetwater, but, so it transpired, had checked his trunk only as far as Butte. All this by rapid telegraphing to and fro was developed before the posse started on its way, but not until after the despoiled train had changed engines at Butte, and then, according to the inexorable rules of the railway, had gone on again. Jarvis remembered that a very decent, quiet fellow boarded the forward passenger coach at Pawnee with a ticket for Sweetwater, but he did not connect him with the tramp so lavishly provided for by the "swell" the night of the collision. But, now they spoke of it, they were about the same size and build, and what made it significant, that fellow seemed to have disappeared when the robbers jumped aboard and went through the passengers, nor did he appear again until just as the train pulled out for Butte, after the robbers were gone. Wiring west after the rushing train speedily brought this answer: "No party with ticket from Pawnee to Sweetwater aboard." And as he had been seen, and talked with, and listened to, up to the moment of the arrival of No. 3 at Butte, Jarvis declared

the man must be somewhere about the town at this moment, and Butte's few policemen were put in search.

All they discovered by noon was that such a party had been seen talking excitedly with a tall stranger in heavy overcoat and cap near the baggage-room just after the train came in. The baggage-man said that the man who presented check for the trunk from Pawnee was tall, slender, and dressed in rough, heavy coat and travelling-cap. The trunk was sole-leather. It had a lot of foreign stamps, hotel posters, and railway-luggage slips all over it, but the baggage-master had no time to examine it. Two men had carried the trunk away between them, declining the offers of the baggage-man. Somebody remembered such a trunk being wheeled in a barrow up Hoyt Street just after No. 3 came in, two men with it, a tall and a short, and that was all.

Recruit Hunter's pass was up at noon, and at eleven thirty he jumped from a light wagon at the south gate, and was hailed by the corporal of the guard as he was striding briskly towards his troop quarters:

"Say, young feller, come back here."

The tall recruit halted, turned and looked around, irresolute. It might be authoritative, it might be mere practical joke; at all events the corporal was responsible, and the soldier walked straight to where the non-commissioned officer was seated on a bench, near the hall door of the guard-house.

"Where you been?"

"To town on pass," was the calm answer.

"What did you hear about that hold-up?"

"Nothing of consequence."

"Well, your troop's gone thief-catching, and you're to report to Sergeant Merriweather as soon as you come in. Now you've come in, you haven't any cigars or drinkables about you, have you? This is the custom-house if you have."

Hunter looked neither annoyed nor disconcerted. Taking two or three cigars from his overcoat-pocket, he said, "Catch," tossed them carelessly to the vigilant wearer of the chevrons, hastened to barracks, deposited his bundles on the bed assigned him, and looked up and down the now silent and almost deserted building in search of some one to tell him what had taken place. Two men, one laid up from the kick of a horse, the other with an arm in a sling, came down to investigate the contents of his bundles, but were disarmed of hostile intent by his easy good nature and prompt offer of cigars. Whiskey he had none. Asking for Merriweather, he was told to look for him at his quarters.

"Catch him out of watching distance of the little woman," said one of them, with a grin. "Mind your eye, Hunter; she'll be making up to you next," said the other, "and we don't want you to be found with your head in the horse-pond, like Pat Shea;" and then it transpired that Trooper Shea had been a devoted admirer of pretty Mrs. Merriweather while she was still housemaid at the Freemans', and that Pat's devotions were equally divided between her and Muldoon's saloon until one winter's morning he was dragged by the legs from his icy winding-sheet with a dreadful gash in his throat and the neck of a



bottle still grasped in his frozen hand. Hunter obeyed his orders and went, and Mrs. Merriweather saw him coming, and ran to her glass before she answered the sharp knock at the door.

"Why, it's Mr. Hunter," she said. "Sure I knew the step before I saw you. Come in, Mr. Hunter. The sergeant's gone to the commissary, and I expect him back every minute."

But the trooper's blue eyes glanced only indifferently into the coquettish and smiling face.

"I was directed here," he said, "to report to Sergeant Merriweather, but I'll go on down to the stables and stop on my return. Thank you, no," he continued, with cold courtesy, as she again urged that he should enter, and strode away stablewards with more than one pair of eyes from the laundresses' quarters gazing after him,—those of Mrs. Merriweather being clouded and perplexed.

It had been a perfect morning, keen and frosty at guard-mount, but warmer as the sun wheeled high towards the zenith, and Atherton had had the regiment out for drill. The broad prairie northeast of the post was alive with prancing, high-mettled steeds, with dashing riders, and not a few carriages and Concord wagons, filled with ladies of the post, all rejoicing at having the regiment once more at home. For nearly two hours Atherton had had the seven troops in rapid movement here and there and everywhere over the plain, and now, the drill over, troop after troop came marching sedately and quietly homeward to cool and calm the horses before reaching stables. In full ranks, fifty men at least to each company, in their trim-fitting fatigue dress, and with the silken swallow-tail waving at the head of each little column, they looked wonderfully business-like and serviceable. The easy, practised seat of every man, the nonchalant grace of every pose, the resolute, dust-covered, sometimes devil-may-care faces, all seemed thoroughly in keeping with the scene and surroundings, thoroughly in accord with the buoyant action of the mettlesome mounts. Accustomed from boyhood to the best of horse-flesh, a born rider and judge, Trooper Hunter could not but see that though these frontier steeds might lack the dainty trappings and satin coats of the park and avenues of Gotham, there was life and spirit, fire and endurance, in almost every one in each of the seven columns. Standing by the northward gate, he keenly studied each troop as it came jogging briskly in. The colonel and the major, the adjutant and certain other officers, seemed to have grouped about the carriages of the ladies at the edge of the drill-ground, but at least one officer rode with every troop,—the best opportunity the new-comer yet had enjoyed of studying these future comrades with whom he might never expect to exchange a word or meet with more than the formal and punctilious touch of the hand to cap. They were moving at ease now until each troop in succession might cross the sentry-post and be called to attention in recognition of the salute of its solitary occupant. Hunter watched the man as he halted, faced outward as the nearest troop drew nigh, then snapped his carbine to the present as the head of the column turned to enter the gate, and Captain Gregg whipped out his sabre, gave voice over his shoulder to the prolonged "Tensh-o-o-on" which brought every man's

head and eyes up and to the front, and then, looking square at the sentry, lowered the glittering blade in acknowledgment of the honor paid to himself and his command. Hunter's eyes kindled at the sight. No matter how humble the private soldier, there at least, on post as sentry, he could expect the recognition of the President himself, than whom in the eyes of the —th there lived no grander potentate on earth. Then, the next thing Hunter knew, the troop came tripping by the line of picket-fence on which he leaned, gazing out upon the spirited scene beyond; and now it was his turn. The teachings of the old days in the famous regiment, wherein every man might be said to have worn kid gloves when not on military duty, were fresh in his mind, as he had been well schooled in the first principles of soldier duty. Yet Hunter felt the blood was mounting to his temples and his heart was beating quicker as he faced the coming column, braced his heels together, and raised his hand to the cap visor, as Captain Gregg came ambling by. The big troop-leader glanced curiously at the lonely figure in the cheap fatigue dress, and again, but with far less precision, returned the salute, and Hunter could not but note the difference. Before another troop could pass him by, he moved quickly away, twenty yards or more beyond the gate, where he still could have good look at the returning soldiery, but was himself beyond saluting distance. One after another the seven separate compact little columns of fours marched steadily in, and jogged on down the gentle slope towards the huge wooden stables. He was still gazing in some odd fascination after the last, the roan troop, when the sound of bounding hoofs, whirring wheels, and gay laughter recalled his wandering thoughts, and, turning sharply to the prairie once more, his eyes fell upon the foremost of the rapidly nearing carriages.

It was a light, open phaeton, drawn by two spirited bays, whose fine action and well-made harness won his instant approval. Beside the carriage trotted the stocky, burly major whom he so well remembered the day of his first interview with Dana in the office. On the other side rode Dana himself, a handsome young soldier, and, far more interested in them than in the possible occupants of the vehicle, Hunter was looking upon them with a soldier's eye, keenly appreciative of Dana's graceful, easy seat and of Mainwaring's good, if bulky, horsemanship, when he suddenly became aware of the fact that instead of turning in at the gate the driver was heading straight southward, evidently intending to drive around to the main gate instead of passing, as Hunter had come, through that portion of the post best known as "Sudstown."

Another minute, and they must flash past him, not ten yards away, with only that low picket-fence between them. Already the sentry had halted and presented arms, both officers touching their caps in acknowledgment. Already the swift team was darting past the gate. The lady occupants of the stylish vehicle were whisking into view, and, yielding to sudden and uncontrollable impulse, Hunter whirled about, jumped the shallow ditch, and sprang behind the nearest of the little houses devoted to the use of the married soldiers. In that one swift glance at the fair occupants he had seen a face at sight of which the

blood went rushing to his own. There, side by side, were Mrs. Mainwaring and the young lady whom he had picked up in his arms the night of that "head-on" collision at Alkali Flats.

## CHAPTER VII.

MAJOR STANNARD had won his bet, and Mainwaring was more than usually "grumpy" in consequence. Ray and his men, riding like the wind, had run down the train-robbers before they reached the Dry Fork, and in a long, stern chase had overhauled first one man, then another, until darkness set in and hid the leading fugitives from sight. Seven lively specimens of the border ruffian were the captives of the sorrel troop by nightfall, and, closely guarded, these were the men turned over next morning to Mr. Sheriff Conway when that much fatigued official and his posse reached the spot where Ray and his men had made camp the night before. Ray himself, with a dozen troopers, had pushed on at daybreak, following the trail of the fugitives in hopes of capturing the more prominent members of the party, who, as it turned out, had most of the ill-gotten booty, while his lieutenant, Mr. Scott, remained in charge of the main body and of the prisoners until the arrival of the civil authorities, who promptly demanded and obtained possession. Conway and his posse, rejoicing, turned homeward at once with their dishevelled prizes, hoping to reach Butte and receive a triumph by evening of the next day. Seven train-robbers was more than had ever been caught before in the history of the Territory, and great would be the rejoicings. Securely bound, the luckless captives, each man lashed to the stirrup of some one of the numerous posse, trudged painfully along the homeward trail. Silent, resolute, almost defiant, no one of their number would give the whisper of a hint as to the identity of the leaders or of one another. All were strangers to Butte. Neither Conway nor his deputies had ever seen one of their faces before. Lieutenant Scott had lost no time in saddling and pushing on after his captain, two of the posse riding with him so as to give the possibly necessary civil sanction to the arrest of the robbers and to take the customary civil credit for the same, naively explaining, "You fellows in the regular army don't need it: we do, or there's no chance for Conway's crowd next election."

And on his triumphant homeward way, what was more natural than that Conway should march through Ransom the following evening just as the ghost-like column in white stable-frocks came swinging up to barracks through the gloaming? As the shortest road ran close to the men's quarters, it happened that the burly sheriff, with his captive train, went clattering by the long wooden porches, and such troopers as happened to be excused from stables—precious few in Atherton's regiment—came rushing out of quarters to see them. All the companies had had to "stand to heel" and have their stalls inspected before they started up the slope, but in Ray's stable were only a few horses, and the few men under charge of Sergeant Merriweather had

already gone to barracks, and were there when Conway came through, and of this few was the new trooper, Hunter.

Still wearing his white stable-frock, and looking a trifle tired and sombre, the recruit had stopped at the corner of the porch and was gazing with but languid interest at Conway's motley cavalcade, when Merriweather joined him. "A precious lot of jail-birds," said the sergeant, as the party came jogging by, sheriff and deputies grinning affably, and many of the latter shouting words of condolence to the stay-at-homes who hadn't been partakers with them in the glories of the chase and capture. Four prisoners had trudged wearily by, while Trooper Hunter replied briefly but without especial civility to the sergeant's remark. Then came the fifth, whose eyes, haggard and hunted-looking, glanced up just one second at the man in stable-frock at the edge of the porch, and instantly there was a flash of recognition. Sergeant Merriweather, turning to his companion in surprise, saw him gazing after number five with an expression of amazement and dismay upon his handsome face.

"Then you've met one of these fellows before, have you?" said Merriweather, with instant suspicion.

But Hunter answered never a word, and, turning short, plunged into the shadows of the great, gloomy barrack.

Not for forty-eight hours longer did Captain Ray return, and with him came the two deputies and one more prisoner. The others, so said the hoof-tracks, had scattered during that first night over the face of the earth, and even the trail soon became indistinct on the hard prairie beyond the Ska; but enough was known to warrant the statement that two of the number had gone towards the agencies away to the north-east, and that their mounts were evidently blooded stock, far swifter than Ray's, for never once had their leaders been in view, and there was no use in further pursuit. Huddled in the county jail, the eight malefactors were awaiting the action of the civil authorities and their identification by the railway people while Ray and his returned men shook off the dust of travel and settled down to garrison duty again. The first thing demanded of Sergeant Merriweather was an account of his stewardship and the progress of the new trooper, and Merriweather looked solemn and mysterious, and was finally understood to say that he had nothing to complain of in him, but he "reckoned other people might." Whereupon Ray bade him speak out. The Kentuckian could not tolerate insinuation or innuendo in a soldier. And Merriweather told the story of the mutual recognition of Hunter and the unknown captive.

It was the evening of his return to Ransom, and just before tattoo, which in those days was always accompanied by a roll-call.

"See if Hunter is in quarters," said the captain, "and send him to me." And Merriweather hastened on his errand.

No. The men in barracks said the swell recruit was out somewhere. "Mebbe he's gone down to pay his respects to Mrs. Merriweather, sergeant," sneered an ill-conditioned fellow, a man no other liked, yet who had served with the old troop over half a dozen years. Merriweather knew it would never do to notice the remark, but it

stung him all the same. "Find him, you, and tell him the captain wants him at once," said he to the would-be sneerer, then slammed the door behind him and sprang out into the night. He had not been home for nearly an hour, and he needed, he told himself, a drink : so thither he went.

Bright lights were burning in some of the quarters, dim ones in others, but in his own the light seemed lowered to the verge of darkness. Not two yards from his door the tall figure of a man in soldier overcoat loomed into view, and, peering closely at him, Merriweather discovered the recruit.

"Where you been, Hunter?" was the sharp, stern demand.

"Looking for you, sergeant," was the quiet reply.

"Who sent you?" And there were both anger and suspicion in the tone.

"Oh, no one. I wished to speak with you a moment. I want some advice."

"There is no need of your coming here, then. You've seen me a dozen times in the last two days: why didn't you ask it then?"

For a moment the younger man was silent; surprise and disappointment clouded his face. So, too, there crept into it a shade of indignation, and it showed plainly in the tone of his reply.

"I had no need of it then," was the answer, as the younger soldier looked squarely into the eyes of the senior. Then, just as when angered by the overbearing ways of Major Mainwaring, Hunter's high spirit overmastered his resolution to take men and matters as he found them, and his eyes, too, flashed angrily. "Whatever thought I had of it ten minutes ago," he said, "is gone now. I won't trouble you."

And with that he would have gone his way, but Merriweather, smarting with jealousy and suspicion, threw himself across his path.

"You go no further, young man, till you hear what I've got to say. This is the third time in less than a week you've been prowling here around my door. Keep your distance in future. D'ye understand? No man enters that house except on my invitation. Now you go to Captain Ray and tell him I sent you."

For a moment the tall young soldier stood there, too astonished to make reply. He had heard the men talk of Merriweather as "tough on recruits." He had understood that new men must take a great deal of bullying from the elders,—that it was purposely done to try their temper and test their sense of subordination. Hitherto he had looked upon Merriweather's asperities as having no personal significance. Now, for the first time, it flashed upon him that he was singled out for harsh, overbearing, and abusive language from a man coarse by nature, mentally, physically, and socially his inferior. All on a sudden the hot blood boiled in his veins, and, forgetful of his new obligations, reckless of anything but his wrath, Trooper Hunter hit out straight, hard, and well, taking Merriweather squarely between the eyes and knocking him flat. The resounding thwack of the blow, the heavy crash of the fall, were echoed from the door-way by a woman's startled cry, and the next thing Hunter knew as he stood there still quivering, his fist clinched and ready to dash again at his floored victim, now feebly



struggling to his knees, the slender form of the sergeant's wife was bending over the beaten man; then she threw herself upon her knees beside her prostrate husband.

"You've struck him cruel hard," she moaned. "Oh, you shouldn't have minded what he said, Mr. Hunter. He's awful jealous.—There, Danny, sit still,—sit still," she pleaded, soothingly. "Run for a little water, Mr. Hunter; he's bleeding fearful. Do be still, Danny. Sure the gentleman never set foot inside your door, nor spoke a word to me. You're foolish, Danny." She strove to stanch the blood with her handkerchief, but he was slowly regaining his faculties, and thrust her rudely away, and then she saw he was fumbling inside the breast of his coat, and fear gave her strength. Hunter had taken a dipperful of water from the barrel at the side of the little hut, and was bringing it, dripping, wondering as he came what would be the outcome of this mad impulse, but she met him half-way, seized the dipper, and bade him go. "Quick," she panted; "don't stop an instant now. Get away before he comes to himself, or he'll shoot. Go instantly, please, Mr. Hunter, or maybe he'll kill me too."

"I can't go if I've hurt him. I must help him up," he began, but she clutched his arm with trembling hands and whirled him about towards the barracks.

"No, no; leave everything to me. Don't come here till I tell you. Don't you speak of this to a soul, unless you want him to kill me. He'll never harm me now unless he sees you still here; but not a word of it. I can keep him quiet." Then she pushed him violently from her, just as the sergeant, staggering to his feet, held forth a feeble hand as though seeking support.

And at that moment, up along the line of barracks, the trumpets began the spirited music of the tattoo. The doors of neighboring cottages began to open, and soldier forms, enveloped in the long caped overcoats, hastened forth. Irresolute, bewildered, hardly knowing what he did and far from knowing what he ought to do, Trooper Hunter hurried from the spot, breasted the slope to the "bench" on which was spread the garrison proper, and found full two-thirds of his troop already gathering in front of their quarters awaiting the signal to form ranks,—the quick, stirring assembly.

"Did you see Doyle? He was looking for you, Hunter," chirruped a little Patlander. "You're blowing, man. Where ye running from?"

But Hunter made no reply. Hooking the collar of his overcoat and buttoning it throughout, he stepped quietly to the point where the centre of his troop usually formed for roll-call, for his place in ranks was close behind a tall corporal who marked the left of the first platoon. The first sergeant, silent and solitary, his swinging lantern in his hand, stood a few yards away, gazing out across the dim parade at the bright lights in the distant quarters of the officers. The soldierly form of the second lieutenant could be dimly discerned a few yards beyond the sergeant. To the right and left, in front of the other barrack buildings, big black groups of men were gathered and sergeants' lights were gleaming, all awaiting the next signal. Suddenly it came, quick,



rippling, merry. "Fall in," were the hoarse words growled from half a dozen soldier throats. The groups quickly resolved themselves into two long columns of files that faced to their left the instant the music ceased, and stood motionless while, with the ease and rapidity of daily practice, the sergeant called the roll.

The non-commissioned head of the sorrel troop twice repeated one name in a questioning, surprised tone, then faced his lieutenant and reported, "Sergeant Merriweather absent, sir." The officer acknowledged the salute, said, "Dismiss the troop," and, facing about, found himself confronting the unexpected apparition of Captain Ray, and heard in the soft dialect of the Blue Grass his captain's words:

"Send Trooper Hunter to me, sergeant, directly you dismiss."

And while Lieutenant Scott went away to report the result of roll-call to the adjutant, and the sergeant again faced his company, Hunter felt his heart sink within him. Already Merriweather, then, had managed to get word to his captain, and the captain was there to wreak vengeance on him, the luckless offender. In violation of the strictest articles of war, he, Hunter Gray, had struck down his superior officer, and was now to suffer the penalty of the law.

"You hear, Hunter: the captain wants you." Then, "Break ranks. March!" was the order, and the troop, cohesive and compact but the moment before, dissolved at the word and fell to pieces, leaving the new member standing all alone. For one moment he remained there to pull himself together, then, nerved to face the worst, strode out to meet his fate, his heart thumping in his breast.

"Hunter," said the captain, "did I not understand you to say that you were a total stranger west of the Missouri, and that you had neither friends nor enemies out here?"

"Yes, sir," was the trooper's reply, his hand still at the cap visor.

"Then how did you come to know that prisoner in the lot brought in by the sheriff?"

Hunter was silent.

"You admit having seen him before?"

"I do, sir."

"Where and when?"

"Before I joined the regiment, sir. I met him with another man at Pawnee."

Captain Ray was silent a moment. He stood scrutinizing in deep concern the pale, clear-cut face before him.

"When I vouched for you in the adjutant's office the day of your enlistment, I felt somehow that you were a truthful man and not a runagate, and I don't wish to be disappointed in you. I don't want to find a man with a clouded record in my troop. What do you know about that robbery?"

"Nothing more than everybody else, sir,—that it took place, and that——" but here again he hesitated.

"Well, that what, Hunter?" said Captain Ray, noting the soldier's significant pause.

"Nothing more, sir. I met one of the prisoners at Pawnee in a

restaurant some few weeks ago. I never saw him before, and I've never seen him since—except that day."

Ray stood calmly studying his man. "I told you it was taking chances to enlist an applicant who looked as though he might have been a man of high social standing," said he, presently, "and you looked me in the eye and said I shouldn't regret taking you in my troop. You've been with me barely a week, and already you are the object of suspicion. How long will it be before I hear you directly accused of something to make me deeply regret my over-confidence?"

Hunter started as though to speak, but the words died on his lips. From the direction of the barracks a soldierly step was swiftly approaching. The turf beneath their feet began to light up with the gleam of a nearing lantern. It was the first sergeant again, and Hunter heard him abruptly halt, true to the formal etiquette of the old cavalry days, and await his captain's signal to approach.

"Remain here a moment," said Ray to his anxious recruit.—"What is it, sergeant?"

"I found Sergeant Merriweather, who was absent from roll-call, at his quarters, sir."

Ray frowned. Another instance of Merriweather's falling off since his marriage.

"What excuse had he for his absence?" was the brief question.

"Well, sir, his wife says that he had met with a mishap,—had a fall in the dark. But it looked to me more like a blow, and he couldn't deny it, sir."

"A blow? Assaulted? When, and by whom?"

"Just a few minutes ago, sir. Close to his own door, I think."

Ray's head went back with a jerk, an odd old trick of his when mentally aroused. "He must know who did it, unless he was struck from behind. Did you ask him?"

"Certainly, sir, and he declares he didn't see, and Mrs. Merriweather declares it was two men, and they ran away towards barracks the moment they downed him."

For a few seconds the sergeant stood looking at his captain's perplexed face. Then the recruit suddenly and impulsively stepped forward. Before he could speak, Captain Ray threw up his hand in warning gesture, as though commanding silence. The first sergeant whirled abruptly and stood facing towards the distant south gate. Borne on the night wind came a confused medley of hoarse murmurs, of distant shouts, of rapid-running feet; then, from far out across the townward stretch of prairie, the muffled report of fire-arms, one, two, three; and from the direction of the guard-house a soldier came rushing like a Wyoming gale.

"What is it, Kid?" sang out the sergeant to the sprinter.

"Sheriff Conway—stabbed, and his prisoners loose. They want the doctor."

"Why," said Ray, in surprise, "what business could he have out here? What does it mean?"

"They were telling me just before tattoo, captain, that Conway came out with a warrant for some one here at the fort, but asked to see

Prisoner Healy, one of the two that escaped the night of the train-robbery,—the one of the two that was recaptured. The man must have knifed him and got away."

"Is Captain Ray there?" came a call from the darkness, in the deep, well-known voice of the colonel, and Ray sprang to answer. Then the sergeant turned on Trooper Hunter.

"Look here, young feller," said he. "They tell me you're the chap Conway wanted."

#### CHAPTER VIII.

A GENERAL court-martial had convened at Ransom for the trial of such enlisted men as should be brought before it, and the president thereof looked out from behind his newspaper during a lull in the proceedings, and, with the characteristic expression which seemed to say, "Don't you dare lie to me now," popped the following question:

"Blake, what's the name of the Three Guardsmen?"

And Blake, never laying down his paper or changing a muscle of his long, sallow countenance, placidly and promptly responded, "Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos."

Captain Gregg, sitting at the right of the presiding officer, after reflecting profoundly a moment, slowly nodded, as though to say, "Right, though I didn't think you knew." Captain Truscott, sitting opposite Gregg and busily occupied with a letter, glanced quickly from under his heavy lashes and compressed his lips. Some of the youngsters farther down the long table looked a bit mystified; but Blake's balance-wheel, Captain Ray, was not a member of the court, and probably would have accepted the reply as authoritative had he been there, for Ray was no reader. It was the questioner who looked dissatisfied, and the questioner, as usual, was Mainwaring.

For a moment he pondered, scowling at Blake the while, then outspoke:

"Well, that's all right, probably; but what I want to get at is the name of that other fellow with 'em—Dee—something—how do you pronounce it?"

"Depends on whether you're in a salon or a saloon, major," answered Blake. "Dartanyan in one case and Dee Artagnan in t'other. What have you stumbled on now?"

"Nothing much. Reading about a fellow that named his horse that and thinks he's going to sweep the race-tracks from Jerome Park to Jerusalem. Dee—what d' you call him? I wouldn't ride one of their steeple-chases on an English saddle if you'd give me a thousand dollars."

"I wouldn't care to ride one on any other kind; certainly not on one of our service saddles," said Blake, whose long legs could wrap around any horse in the regiment. "Those high, sharp pommels are the worst kind of thing to use 'cross country."

"Not if you know how to ride," said the major, who loyally stood

by everything that was regulation. "I'll bet you any real cavalryman will tell you that he'd rather use a McClellan for any kind of riding than any other kind of saddle."

"Done!" said Blake, "and leave it to Stannard or Ray." And here he kicked across under the table to rouse his opposite fellow-member to full rejoicing in the colloquy, for Mainwaring couldn't bear to hear Stannard quoted as authority on any subject, and was sure that Ray was a vastly overrated officer.

"What does Stannard know about it, anyhow?" bristled Mainwaring: "he never rode anything but a McClellan. And as for Ray, I know a dozen better riders and cavalymen who agree with me."

"All right. You come out to the hurdles after court adjourns, major, and we'll give you a chance to see the difference. That pretty mare of Mrs. Ray's is to have a jumping-lesson this afternoon, and you can try both saddles and systems, if you like."

But the re-entrance of the judge-advocate with the prisoner put a stop to the chat, and Mainwaring called the court to order.

A week had rolled by since the night of the assault on Sergeant Merriweather and the stabbing of Sheriff Conway. The first episode seemed to have died out of the interest of even the few who knew of it, for Merriweather's lips were sealed, but the second was still the topic of excited talk.

And well it might be. Armed with a warrant, so he claimed, for the arrest of certain soldiers of the garrison, Conway had come to the post about tattoo that evening, had stopped at the guard-house and asked to see Prisoner Healy, a soldier under charges of assault and robbery of a fellow-rooper only a few weeks before. Healy and a companion confined as an accomplice had sawed their way out and escaped, as has been told, but the former was recaptured and brought back. He was a merry little Irishman, an almost universal favorite before the trouble occurred. The garrison declared to a man he couldn't have had a hand in the robbery, though it was probable he couldn't have kept out of the assault. But evidence of a serious character was piled up against him when he made the suspicious attempt to get away. Conway was possessed with the idea that Healy knew something about the train-robbery. No one could surely identify any of the seven languishing in Butte's stronghold, and the sheriff was at his wits' end. The officer of the guard had gone over to get his heavy coat and to change into rough rig for the night when Conway appeared, and an over-confident sergeant, detailing a sentry to stand close by, permitted Healy to come out of the prison-room and be questioned. At first the young Irishman was stubborn and would tell nothing, but gradually he made admissions and kept glancing fearfully over his shoulder as though he thought the sentry might hear. So Conway drew him around behind the portico of the heavy log structure, and told the sentry to come no nearer: he would be responsible. The very next minute the sentry heard a stifled cry, a scuffle. Healy darted away like a shot into the darkness. The sentry and the guard pursued in vain, and Conway lay stabbed to the hilt of a ghastly-looking knife. He had bled almost

to death before the surgeon reached him or unskilled hands could check the flow. Now he was lying at the post hospital, slowly convalescing, but very weak and dazed.

The question was, what had become of Healy? Where was he in hiding? for no man answering his description had boarded the Trans-continental trains far or near. Butte was a big, straggling frontier town, illimitable in its future possibilities, said the "promoters," and equally illimitable in present devices for concealing stolen property or stealing practitioners. Butte had a large floating population and small sinking fund, the latter devoted to rewards for capture of malefactors, and Conway had a wide-spread reputation for sleepless vigilance and luckless ventures. He made many arrests, and nearly as many errors in the eyes of the law, since convictions were few and far between. He had gloried in his seven desperadoes just about forty-eight hours. Then, as man after man looked them over and said he couldn't testify against them, as they proved to be perfect strangers, Conway's face grew lined and anxious. It began to look as though failure were again about to stamp him, when some one suggested that Pat Healy at the post could tell him all he wanted to know, and somebody else whispered that the sooner he got every man even remotely connected with the robbery the better would it be for his chance of re-election. Then he came to Ransom trebly armed, but his very first victim proved far too clever, adroit, and dangerous. The knife was driven furiously, and it was God's mercy the sheriff was not killed outright.

And then Miss Leroy, the Mainwarings' guest, had developed an odd fad for an Eastern girl. A more independent young woman had never been seen at Ransom. She was always unlike other girls, said Mrs. Mainwaring. She had always visited the poor and needy at home, had headed all manner of charitable schemes as a young girl, and had a mania for reading aloud to the sick. Few of the ladies of the —th, deeply imbued though some of them were with religious faith, had ever thought it their duty to visit the patients in the big post hospital. The surgeon and the steward did all that. The young assistant surgeon was a bachelor and susceptible. Miss Leroy's plea to be allowed to visit the hospital was eagerly granted, and he himself was there to escort her. One of the first patients to interest her was Sheriff Conway, to whom she was now reading aloud an hour every morning. Mild raillery had no effect upon her. Expostulation was not resorted to, for it speedily developed that, with all her slender, dainty physique, Miss Leroy had a vigorous, if placid, will of her own. The post surgeon had said there was no harm whatever, in fact it was a blessing to more patients than one, therefore by all means let Miss Leroy keep it up. Thereafter there was no one to say her nay. Secretly Mrs. Mainwaring had hoped the colonel and her husband would express disapproval, but, with the perversity of their sex, they persisted in saying to Miss Leroy that she was an angel of goodness, and it was a wonder that other women had not done likewise long before. By the time she had been three weeks at Ransom Kate Leroy was better known and infinitely better loved in the quarters of the married soldiers whose little ones were ailing, and in the wards of the big hospital, than all

but two or three of the ladies of the regiment. It was a new departure at the post.

Day after day, then, was she to be seen, each morning about ten o'clock, on her way to her patients, and with them she would stay until orderly call sounded at noon. There were four men in hospital when she began; there were seven men at the end of the week, and the doctor said she was making it too attractive a place after all.

"Next thing," said Wilkins, "she'll be after beatifying the gyard-house."

Mrs. Mainwaring found that telling her niece what people said about this fad of hers had no effect whatever. So she went a bit further, and told her things people really had not said, but might say: this, too, fell harmless. Afternoons and evenings Miss Leroy was ready to devote to social duties and Mrs. Mainwaring, but the morning readings to the men in the convalescent ward went on without interruption or noteworthy incident an entire week; then came a change in the arrangement.

True to his colors, Mainwaring was out at the hurdles ten minutes before anybody else that afternoon, and loudly calling for Blake to come and make good his word. He came soon enough, Mrs. Ray and Mrs. Blake, two charming women, with him. Presently out rode Captain Billy on his old favorite "Dandy," now a sedate steed over ten years of age; after him strode his Irish groom Hogan, leading a beautiful little bay mare, all points and elasticity, a spirited, dancing creature, with dainty head and legs, brilliant eyes, pretty pointed ears, and a satin coat that fairly glistened. The hurdles were at the edge of the drill-ground on the northeast side of the post, and no sooner was the party sighted from the barracks than a number of troopers made their way to the fence, and, with appreciative eyes, stood watching at respectful distance the preparation for Stella's first lesson with side-saddle and skirt.

Among the men was Sergeant Merriweather, still discolored as to his face, but an interested spectator for all that. Mainwaring, Ray, and Blake were in riding dress, Mainwaring and Ray in saddle, and Mainwaring's first bellow was, "Now, where's your English saddle?"

"Coming," said Blake, coolly, and pointed towards the stables, whence, at easy gait, a tall, slender soldier came riding a troop horse, carrying something over his arm. Blake recognized at once Ray's recent acquisition, Hunter. Mainwaring stopped glaring at Blake, turned and gazed at the new-comer with all his eyes, and then whirled in saddle towards Ray and ejaculated, "Well, I'll be damned!" There were times when even the presence of ladies couldn't restrain Mainwaring's impulse to verbal outbreaks.

"Thought you had a whole troop of rough riders, Ray," said he, after again glowering at the new-comer until he grew tired of the calm indifference which rewarded his gaze. "This ain't one of your lot, is it? I've seen him before."

"Yes, the day you persuaded him not to enlist," laughed Ray, good-naturedly. "I roped him in afterwards." Then, lowering his voice, "He's got a hand on a horse's mouth as light as a child's."



The tall recruit had dismounted from his own troop-horse, and, having thrown the reins over a picket of the fence, was now quietly approaching Stella, with a light English saddle in his hand. Hogan, dismounted, was petting her glossy neck and speaking soothingly, but the pretty creature, with ears erect, was switching about, apparently hunting for something at which to shy, and the ladies' furs gave her ready excuse. The moment Mrs. Ray stepped forward to pat her, Stella backed vigorously, dragging Hogan with her, and, despite Ray's practised hand extended to aid, back she persisted in going until she bumped into the hurdle-post. This furnished excuse for a kick and a plunge. Ray sprang from his saddle, and, telling Hogan to look after Dandy, himself took Stella's bit and began Blue Grass expostulation, which seemed more intelligible than Irish. At all events, the mettlesome creature quieted down long enough to admit of Hunter's approach, and that tall, silent young soldier quickly set and girthed the saddle, and then, at a nod from his captain, vaulted on her back, Ray letting go the moment the reins were gathered.

And then did Stella dance nimbly, daintily about, playful and spirited, but not in the least vicious, Hunter giving her head abundant room to toss, and maintaining only light and easy pressure on the bit. Mainwaring sniffed disdainfully at the uncavalrylike pose, the long, flat seat, the knees far to the front, the feet set home in the stirrups and away forward. He sniffed still more when Stella began to bound and curvet, and Hunter rose slightly in his stirrups, riding lightly, springingly, and never thinking of sitting fast. Ray called to Merriweather to bring one or two men and come over to the hurdles, and, without an audible word, the order was obeyed, though it was remarked at the time that the sergeant hesitated a bit, possibly because of his disfigured face.

"Try her over the bar first, Ray," said Mainwaring. And, with a man stationed at each post and the bar set easily nearly three feet from the ground, Hunter guided his pretty mount to the spot, let her sniff at and examine the strange affair, then as quietly rode her a dozen yards away, turned her head to the bar, and, relaxing the reins, gave her the hint to go, his long sinewy legs close pressed to the saddle. Stella came at it delightedly, but changed her mind with the second stride, and would have flown the track but for the firm hand and closed leg. Finding she couldn't dodge and had to do it, she rose high, and, half affrighted, cleared the bar and came bounding lightly to the turf, then bolted away with blood in her eye and the bit in her teeth. Only a few rods, however. Hunter, sitting her like wax now, reined her round in broad circle, headed her back for the group, gradually checking her speed as he neared the party.

"Try it from that side," said Ray, and over she popped, light as a bird. A third and a fourth time was the leap repeated, Stella enjoying being the centre of attraction and improving on her efforts. Then came the attempt at the wider hurdle, a man being stationed at each end to give her the idea of posts between which she must jump: this, too, proved a bagatelle. And all this time Hunter had never opened his lips to speak. Now, in obedience to the captain's signal, the trooper reined up close to him.

"What do you think of her jumping?" asked Ray.

"She has been well taught, sir," was the answer, in low, quiet tone. "I think she will give Mrs. Ray little trouble; but she has never been ridden with the side-saddle and skirt, I understand."

No, she had not. Hogan produced the side-saddle and a cavalry blanket. In two minutes the mare was housed in the one and Hunter rolled, as to his legs, in the other. This time mounting was not so easy. Stella despised that blanket and would not suffer it to come near her, and that blanket was to be tried in lieu of a riding-skirt. Mainwaring sat on his horse, shouting all manner of suggestions, sorely trying Ray's sense of subordination. At last, impatiently, he hazarded the remark, "Phoo, Ray! that man can't ride. There's a dozen men in my old troop would have had her over the hurdle, blanket and all, by this time."

The blood rushed to Hunter's face, and he bit his lip hard. Thus far Ray had been holding the mare's head by the bit,—a hub, so to speak, about which she circled, first one way, then the other, to dodge the blanket-swathed form. Now the trooper was heard to speak.

"Pardon me, captain, but may I take her myself?"

Instantly the two ladies exchanged a glance. "I told you he looked like a gentleman," said Mrs. Ray, in low tone.

Then began a very pretty piece of coaxing. With one firm hand at the bit, the blanket still strapped about his waist, Trooper Hunter had managed to reach Stella's neck with his right hand, and, patting her softly, was murmuring gently. "Makin' love to her in Irish," Hogan muttered to Duffy. Several additions had been made to the group by this time. The colonel, Dana by his side and followed by his orderly, came riding around from the direction of the stables, and, doffing his cap to the ladies, sat in saddle an interested spectator. Several wives and children of the soldiers had been attracted from their quarters to the fence, while a little farther back, aloof from the general run of Sudstown people, with a pale-blue shawl, one of Mrs. Freeman's discarded evening wraps, over her head, pretty Mrs. Merriweather stood at gaze. Hunter slowly lifted an edge of the blanket and let Stella nose it, which she did, feigned to be much frightened, and attempted again to pull away. But at last, wearying of fruitless efforts, she consented to smell of it, and then nudged it disdainfully aside. The next thing she knew, Hunter had slipped both hands back, one to the pommel, the other to her mane, and with agile spring alighted on the saddle, threw the right leg over the horn, and, despite her plunging, Stella found herself once more under his weight, firmly held as ever. Five minutes' petting made her forget her burden, even when shewn the shadow of the skirt. In less than ten she had leaped the hurdle to and fro half a dozen times, and was realizing she had made a fool of herself. And then some unhallowed inspiration seized the major.

"What I want is to see how she'll behave under a cavalry saddle. —You've ridden one often enough, I suppose?" he said, scowling at Hunter.

"Never until I came here, sir."

"Mean to tell me you've never been in the cavalry?"

"I told the major as much a fortnight ago," was the firm yet respectful reply.

"Well, where'd you learn to ride, then?" asked Mainwaring, who had a fixed idea that no one not of the cavalry could be at home in the saddle; this, too, despite long years among vaqueros, Comanches, and cowboys.

"I learned to ride as a boy, sir."

"Well, dismount and put on that McClellan saddle," said Mainwaring, curtly.

Atherton heard the order, saw the quick glance of the soldier towards his captain, and the half-vexed expression in Ray's face, and, glancing at Mrs. Ray, hesitated no longer.

"No, no, major, don't change the saddle. Let us see how she'll take the bar again. Set it loosely, you men, so that it will slide off the pegs if she strikes."

Sergeant Merriweather was busily setting the peg at three feet again, when, glancing up to see that the opposite end was at the same notch, he caught sight of the slender figure of his wife standing well back of the group at the fence, her eyes fixed, not on him or on the ladies, but, with deep, intense interest in her gaze, upon the tall, erect young soldier on the spirited mare. Up to this moment Merriweather had been silently carrying out his instructions, all his attention given to them or to Stella. Of the man in saddle he took apparently no notice whatever. Now, forgetting everything else in hand, he stood there, half bent over, gazing, with heaven only knows what thoughts surging through his brain, straight and steadfast at his unconscious wife.

"Sergeant, don't you hear?" At last the impatient words seemed to reach him, and the flustered face of his comrade at the opposite post recalled him to himself. "The captain says set it at three feet six. Quick! She's coming."

Coming she was, with a rush, Hunter's hands held low on her withers, his legs dangling on the near side as she bounded over the springy turf. Merriweather jerked out the iron peg and thrust it into the three-six hole, lifting the bar as he did so, but turning the hook of the pin upward instead of down. It was no leap at all. There was no reason why she should strike, no reason why, if she did strike, any harm would occur. But it was all done in a second of time. Sitting sideways, instead of astride, Hunter was at a disadvantage. He could not "lift her" as he was accustomed. The excited creature dashed at the bar as though reckless of its added height; the off forefoot struck the tough, unyielding wood, tripped her, threw her headlong on the turf, hurling Hunter, blanket, and herself in a confused and rolling heap. A woman's shriek went up at the instant, but it came not from the lips of the women on the field.

It seemed but another instant before Hunter was on his feet, reins in hand, while Stella was struggling to rise. Forgetful of himself, he sought to see if the mare were harmed. Ray and Hogan sprang to his side. "Are you hurt, man?" they eagerly asked, but he laughed it off.

"Not at all, sir. I'm only troubled about her."

Panting, wide-eyed, and startled, Stella stood, with heaving flanks, wondering what it all meant. Ray hastened to reassure his wife. Atherton rode up to satisfy himself the soldier was uninjured. Over beyond the roadway and fence two of the laundresses were leading Mrs. Merriweather, shocked and actually weeping, away. At them the sergeant stood gazing fixedly, his discolored face working with passion, and Captain Blake had twice to bid him pick up the bar before he answered and obeyed.

"That's what you call a stand-off, I suppose," muttered the man at the opposite post, as Merriweather brushed him by. "Don't tell me I don't know who flooded you." But the sergeant never heard. He was hastening after his wife.

"Ray," said the colonel as they were riding into the garrison a few minutes later, "that was a piece of gross carelessness on the part of your sergeant. That man has been getting less reliable every month for the last two years. You'd better think twice should he apply for re-enlistment."

"Gerald," said clear-sighted Mrs. Blake, as she clung to the arm of the captain, after leaving Mrs. Ray at her gate, "I'm glad that didn't happen in your troop. Are you sure Sergeant Merriweather set that pin properly? Wasn't it his wife that shrieked?"

"Pet," said Mrs. Mainwaring to her niece, just as the young doctor lifted his cap and looked for an invitation to enter, as he met the two ladies returning from a call at the Rays' an hour later, "you and Dr. Jayne came near getting another patient this afternoon, and a most interesting one, they say, a mysterious swell in the Sorrels. He might serve to make you forget the handsome unknown who played doctor for you the night of the collision.—She hasn't told you about that, I suppose, has she, doctor?"

"M—ah, no, no indeed," said Dr. Jayne, in evident dismay. "What was he like, pray?"

"Oh, divinely tall and most divinely fair," said Mrs. Mainwaring, laughing. "Kate has his flask and handkerchief yet, waiting for him to return and claim them—and her."

And that evening Miss Leroy wondered whether aunts were always so disagreeable, or whether this was merely her own fault, and entirely her fault, because she had admitted that, though there were agreeable men in the regiment, they were all married.

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## CHAPTER IX.

CONWAY, convalescing, had been bundled back to town, leaving blessings on the head of his fair nurse and reader. Corporal Shannon, kicked by a mule in the quartermaster's corral, was installed in his place. The daily reading was going on in the hospital, despite social duties that grew more exacting as Miss Leroy became better known and more appreciated. Over in the sorrel troop's quarters Hunter,

despite inflexible reserve as to his past, had won the good will of most of the men. Quin, a garrison bully, pitching upon a smaller comrade for a fancied affront, had been himself pitched into a snow-drift, and when he rushed at his antagonist was floored flat by as neat a swing on the jaw as ever the —th had heard of. It was a new blow, in fact, to the regiment, and the story went from barrack to barrack that the Sorrels had got a swell boxer as well as rider. Curiosity as to Hunter's antecedents burst all bounds. Major Mainwaring's assertion that he had seen the fellow somewhere before and knew he must be a deserter was sufficient to make the recruit an object of interest in garrison society, even if he had not won distinction as trainer of Mrs. Ray's beautiful mare, whose delicate mouth and Eastern schooling made her somewhat too sensitive for ordinary cavalry handling. Ray, once the light rider of the regiment, could have coached her beautifully, but Ray was growing bulky with years, and an old bullet-wound in the thigh, received during a Sioux campaign years before, was troubling him as winter wore on. What no one understood was how Ray came to select Hunter, for Ray declared he had no previous knowledge of him whatever, which was true. Truscott, when appealed to for his opinion, smiled gravely, as was his wont, and said Ray had as unerring an eye for a horseman as he had for a horse. But it was in "Sudstown," where dwelt the wives and daughters of the soldiery, that Trooper Hunter's goings and comings, doings and sayings, were becoming matters of such absorbing interest. He was credited with being fabulously wealthy, among other things, for he certainly had money at his command. He also had friends and acquaintances—some said a wife and family, or at least a lady-love—somewhere in town, for he had twice asked for passes, and more than once was believed to have gone thither without that formality. Mrs. Merriweather, who held her head so high above the other women, was accused of "setting her cap" for the stranger, and she laid herself open to calumny by declaring to one or two envious dames that Mr. Hunter was a frequent caller, only "Dan" didn't like it and had warned him off. "Indeed, he got to coming too often for his own good," said she, which meant worlds of helpless regret on her part.

Men sought the confidence of the new soldier, but gave it up in ignorance as deep as that with which they came to him. Some he laughed at, some he snubbed, none he gratified. It was fortunate he knew how to fight, for there were evil spirits that would have mauled him otherwise on general principles, but Ray kept a sharp lookout for his *protégé*. He, at least, should have fair play, despite the hints of the first sergeant that Conway could tell something about him, and had even asked him, Sergeant Fellows, where he could find Hunter the night he came out with a warrant and was knifed by Healy. Ray rode to town and demanded of Conway what he knew or suspected, and Conway said, "Nothing; at least nothing that I could prove." Ray had flouted the idea of Hunter's being connected in any way with the train-robbers: indeed, it was doubtful if the leaders would ever be caught. They were lost to all search, deep in the Hills, and their luckless accomplices were still held awaiting the action of some Federal



official yet to arrive. Stannard and Mainwaring had had almost an open rupture, all on account of Hunter, who, daily exercising and training Mrs. Ray's pretty Stella, was, nevertheless, performing all other duties with his troop. Mainwaring, noting how successful Hunter had been with Stella, concluded that he should like to have him try his hand on Velvet, Mrs. Mainwaring's saddler, who had never been known to jump, and was confounded when the trooper most respectfully but positively begged to be excused. Atherton was away, summoned to meet the department commander at Pawnee. Stannard was in temporary command. Mainwaring asked that the trooper should be directed to perform duty for him, for which he was perfectly willing to pay, or else be ordered to cease doing it for Ray. Stannard said no soldier could be compelled to perform menial service for any officer if he didn't wish to, and if he did not wish to train Mrs. Mainwaring's horse he should not be made to. Mainwaring declared training horses could not be menial service in the eyes of a true cavalryman, and Stannard said that it was if a man thought so. Mainwaring got very wroth, and swore that between them, Stannard and Blake and Ray, they were bound to spoil a man who gave promise of being a good soldier, despite his shadowy antecedents, and again demanded that he be ordered to cease handling Stella for Ray. Stannard said he only did it for the love of the thing, for practice and recreation, and not for emolument, and he should not be denied. Then Atherton came back; Mainwaring appealed to him from Stannard's decision, and Atherton said he'd investigate and decide next morning.

But it was decided for him that night.

"Ray," said he, at evening stables, "whoever set that huge haystack so close to the stables had no idea of prudence. If it were to catch fire your premises would go. I shall order it removed tomorrow."

Sergeant Merriweather, stable sergeant of the troop up to a week before, heard these words, and so did Sergeant Conro, to whom he was pointing out certain defects in the mechanism of a grain-chute from the loft above their heads. It was storming, and grooming was being conducted inside. Merriweather stopped short in his explanation, stared at the colonel as though the words had dazed him in some way, and then had to be reminded of the subject which he was discussing.

The wind that had banked the snow-clouds in the southeast during the day veered towards nightfall and blew strong from the southwest. At tattoo it was whisking the hay from the quartermaster's corral and sending it streaming across the line of stables and out upon the bleak prairie, while, still farther along, under the "bench," the big hay-stacks beyond the corral seemed stripping in the gale, and the biggest of all was that which projected half-way across the open space in front of the line of gable-ends and just opposite that of Ray's troop. At tattoo the gale was almost a blizzard, and Atherton, ever on the defensive against fires, bade the troop officers look well to their company kitchens and see that all the ranges and stoves were securely banked, then went over to the guard-house in person and held brief consultation with Blake, who was officer of the day, and his officer of the guard, who, as ill



luck would have it, was Lieutenant Brady, at whom Atherton looked with scant favor. He was a young man whom Blake described as "one of the detriments of the service." He had been fairly well educated somewhere, had enlisted when it was too evident he was in no condition to make a living otherwise, but that was in the summer of '76, when twenty-five hundred men were suddenly raised by Congress to fill the gaps in the regiments engaged in the Sioux war, and the riff-raff of the Atlantic cities was rushed to the frontier. He won a company clerkship in three months, which was considered immense good luck, and lost it within the year, which was supposed to be luck as bad, but turned out to be the stepping-stone to fortune in the soldier's eyes. He was one of an escort attacked by road agents, and, in fighting desperately for his own life, had saved that of the paymaster. The sergeant and corporal with them were killed. Brady was "lanced" on the spot and came home a hero, the subject of a panegyric from the pen of the paymaster, whose uncle was a Senator of much wealth and much knowledge of mining, but little of men. He was on the paymaster's bond for a big sum, and the next thing the —th knew a stranger to their ranks appeared with a commission as second lieutenant, a glib tongue and a convivial turn, plenty of money to start with, and a letter of introduction to Atherton from a famous war general, which letter was susceptible of two interpretations and was written, there was little doubt, at the instance of the Senator in question, a prominent member of the committee on military affairs. "This will be handed you by Lieutenant Brady," said the letter, "who so distinguished himself in the affair on the Mimbres last year. The department thought best to assign him to the —th, and I have assured his friends that in consigning him to you I have placed him in the best hands possible." Senator Sivright was thoroughly satisfied, his nephew the paymaster a bit perplexed, but too wise just then to dissect any other man's motives or letters, lest his own should become objects of scrutiny. Brady proved a jolly acquisition at first, could sing a good song, tell a good story, and was "smart" in many ways and lavish in all. There was a story (put in circulation by a soldier whose reward for that Mimbres affair had been a discharge and not a commission) to the effect that when they were suddenly attacked by those desperadoes the paymaster had crawled under the wagon and cried, and Brady "allowed" when in his cups that he could tell things, and would if not "properly persuaded." Certain it is that for the first year of his service Brady spent and drank more than a second lieutenant's share. Then the Senator failed of re-election, owing possibly to some shortcomings in his mines; his nephew, the paymaster, succeeded in planning a robbery that worked better; and this opened the stagnant flow of promotion in the pay corps, and left Brady without a protector.

But he held a life office, if he behaved himself, and, being a bachelor in a regiment that spent most of its days in the inexpensive luxuries of field-service, he had managed to pay his debts and, so long as he let whiskey alone, keep out of serious trouble. But Brady and John Barleycorn never "connected" that the former did not, as Blake said, make an ass of himself, and his asininity took shape in a peculiar

form of mania that afflicts the bibulous Hibernian,—that of imagining, believing, and telling tales of deep and bloody mystery at the expense of his fellow-men in higher social esteem than himself. Friends Brady had few, enemies none worse than himself. He felt the isolation of his lot, wanted to marry, and was refused by the girls he wanted, which made him gloomier, but campaign work saved him from the solace he would have sought, and Brady had been doing fairly well, for him, when Rawson returned from leave and gave him a crony and an excuse for a start. Atherton whisked the crony off, as has been said, before much mischief was done, but he could not banish the whiskey, and Brady marched on guard the morning of this eventful day, looking much the worse for three weeks' wear and tear and little the better for two strong cocktails.

Still, he was not incapable of performing his duty, by any means, though eyes and nose held out their danger-signals. Blake had given him a sharp reminder at retreat, and Brady had taken a stiffer brace for fear of consequences. He was feeling shaky when the colonel strode into the ill-lighted room of the officer of the guard, Blake at his heels, and thus addressed him: "Mr. Brady, I want you to keep a special watch against fire to-night. Order your sentries about the stacks and stables to allow no one to approach them with pipe or cigar. Who are sentries on Numbers 5 and 6?"

Brady looked appealingly at the sergeant, who quickly produced his lists. "Reinhardt and Monahan, first relief; Blair and Scully second; Duffy and Hunter third, sir. All good men, sir."

"Hunter's our new man," said the colonel, eying sharply the officer of the guard. "Have you given him personally his orders?"

"N—not his night orders as yet, sir," said Brady, well knowing he had questioned him as to none of them, day or night.

"Well, sir," said Atherton, "you cannot be too vigilant to-night. Make frequent inspections, and see that your non-commissioned officers do likewise." Then, as once more he got out into the wind, he bent his head to avoid the blast. "Have you cautioned him, Blake? He looks anything but alert."

"I don't think he's been drinking much to-day, sir. He seems to realize that he can take no chances. I'll keep an eye on him."

There was a joyous little gathering at Ray's that night. The Mainwarings, Truscotts, and Blakes, with devoted Dr. Jayne on Miss Leroy's account, had dined there; a number of post people had dropped in later, and Miss Leroy, "looking uncommonly well, if not absolutely pretty," said a lady friend, was being made much of by everybody, despite a slight propensity on the part of some to be facetious about the daily Bible class, for that artful maiden and daughter of the church, after getting her auditors interested in tales of flood and field, had gradually led on to the introduction of holier themes. By the end of the first week the New Testament was slipped in among her books, and selected chapters were explained in very different style from anything her soldier patients had ever heard before, and these had become part of the lesson of the day. Blake declared that Father Keefe, of Butte, was getting jealous; but Miss Leroy was serenely

superior to any and all allusions or reflections. She would stoop to neither controversy nor defence. It was her faith, and that was enough. The quartermaster had laughingly suggested that he thought of getting sent to hospital so as to become one of the elect, and Miss Leroy had studied his face one moment with those clear, beautiful eyes of hers, and gravely replied that it might be necessary for him to go to even greater lengths before he could be considered worthy. Then Mainwaring had jocosely asked why she didn't start a missionary boom among the officers, whereat Miss Leroy flushed just a little and then smilingly replied that it was not because they did not need it more than the men she had met, but she had no surplus energy to waste.

"Has no surplus seed to sow on barren ground, major," interposed Blake. "You remember the parable of the hare and the tortoise." Which helped Mainwaring no whit, and only evoked a reproachful glance from Miss Leroy, seeing which Blake whispered so that several heard, "I'd wear sackcloth and ashes a week if Mainwaring could prove he knew the difference between Jacob's Ladder and Jack and the Bean-Stalk."

"Blake," remonstrated Truscott, a moment later, when he got him to one side, "you must be more prudent, not to say considerate. Mainwaring is too good a soldier to be treated with derision, and you'll make an enemy I should hate to see you have, if you continue." Blake had had other warnings. His clear-headed young wife had already seen in Mrs. Mainwaring's somewhat studied courtesy of greeting that something was amiss, and had little doubt that the major had carried home his version of the Three Guardsmen episode in the courtroom, which was indeed the case, though, fortunately for Blake, Mainwaring couldn't remember the strange names so glibly given him. Mrs. Blake had sought by every gentle, tactful way in her power to make amends for her beloved Gerald's uncanny propensity to ridicule, but the wound was deeper with Mrs. Mainwaring than with the doughty major. She refused to be mollified, while he, ever tempting somebody by his irrepressible habit of launching impetuous comment or criticism at anybody whose methods differed from his own, was as constantly inviting reprisals. Relations were strained, therefore, and Blake should have been more guarded. They had even come to such a pass that Mrs. Mainwaring was finding serious fault with her niece because of a growing intimacy between her and Nannie Blake, and matters were destined to come to a climax in more than one garrison affair, and come to it this very night.

Mrs. Ray had been in ignorance of any serious difference between the Mainwarings and Blake. Indeed, she often said she did not see how anybody could take Blake seriously. But during the dinner it had become apparent more than once. Not in Mainwaring: he, as Blake put it, was mannerless as ever. Mainwaring talked as much and as loudly to Blake as he did to his hostess, on whose right he sat. There were few topics that could be discussed, outside of horse-shoeing, grooming, and company kitchens, in which Mainwaring could be considered authority, but in one and all was he disputatious, challenging

the speaker to prove the words, even, as sometimes happened, when the challenged party was a woman and entitled to assert no stronger reason than "Because."

Mainwaring carried a conversational chip on his shoulder even at dinner-parties, and to-night it had been more than ordinarily in evidence. It was after dinner, and before visitors came dropping in, and the five ladies were chatting in the parlor, that Mrs. Mainwaring's constraint towards Mrs. Blake became marked, as well as her frequent efforts at breaking in upon the cordial, friendly talk between that lady and her niece.

Finally, just after midnight, when it was time for all to be going to their homes, Blake, whose duty as officer of the day had twice called him away, again was missing. Ray promptly threw his cape over his shoulders to escort Mrs. Blake, although she lived close at hand, and with merry chat and laughter the various ladies and their escorts were trooping forth into the keen night air, when Mrs. Truscott, who was foremost, held up her hand and said, "Hush! I hear something," and her face took on an instant expression of alarm.

The wind was no longer violent, but it blew with steady force across the parade, and sounds from the direction of the guard-house near the south gate, or the stables along the east front, were carried out to the waste of prairie stretching away towards the far, pine-crested heights of the Elk range. Yet it was towards the guard-house, whose twinkling lights could be plainly seen, that Mrs. Truscott was gazing. Mainwaring was, as usual, talking loudest of the party, and was the last to cease. "Nonsense, Mrs. Truscott, you can't hear the baby crying," he almost derisively exclaimed, whereat the lady stamped a shapely foot and spoke as her father, their old colonel, would have spoken when his wife was not present, and this time with effect.

Some one, panting, came running across the parade. It was the corporal of the guard.

"Captain Ray," he cried, "Captain Blake says please come to him, quick, at the south gate."

Ray went like a shot. The corporal started to follow, but Mrs. Blake, alarmed and trembling, begged him to stop.

"What's happened?" demanded Mainwaring. "Who's hurt?"

"I don't know, sir. Nobody's hurt that I know of, but there's a patrol out."

"After some drunken man of Ray's troop,—that's all," said Mainwaring, "and Blake don't want to put him under guard. See if it ain't. Come," he said, tendering an arm to his wife.

But Mrs. Blake knew her own mind, and, without a word of reply, started straight across the road in the direction taken by Ray.

"Oh, don't go, Mrs. Blake;" "Don't go, Nannie;" "I'm sure it's nothing serious," were the various cries that followed her, but she never faltered. "Good-night," she cried; "I'm going to Gerald." Reluctantly the doctor called after her,—

"Oh, wait, Mrs. Blake. If you must go, I'll—I'll escort you."

"Yes," said Miss Leroy, firmly, "and take me too." Saying which, she started her escort almost on a run.

"Pet—Kate—indeed I protest. Indeed you must not go!" called Mrs. Mainwaring, loudly.

"Aw, Kate, don't be so idiotic," shouted the major, but all to no purpose. "Pet" and her obedient *Æsculapius* were already in swift pursuit, and, if not out of hearing, out of sight.

And then, all of a sudden, the eastward gable ends of the barracks, the east side of the guard-house tower, the topmast of the tall white flag-staff, were all for one brief instant flashed on the night in a lurid glare, and as suddenly died out of sight. Away over beyond the edge of the bluff a dull, smothered, booming sound smote the wintry air, and something shook the windows and caused the earth to tremble. Then a carbine cracked and a sentry yelled, half stifled; then came a distant sound of crackling, like pistol-shots; a trumpet pealed, and sounds of rush and scurry followed. There was only one explanation,—the magazine.

#### CHAPTER X.

IT was eleven-thirty that night when Corporal Judkins, posting his relief, came stumbling along the rough ground below the "bench," and turned into the flat between the quartermaster's hay-stacks and the stables. No. 5 he had posted at the east gate and picked up the shivering sentry who for two mortal hours had been swearing and trotting up and down in vain effort to keep warm. No. 6, down among the shadows of the stacks and stables, was not so easy to find. When at last his challenge was heard, he leaped from the shelter of the very stack that had called forth the colonel's condemnation that evening at stables, and, between cold and excitement—or something, was incoherent in his formula for receiving relief, and had to be sharply prompted by the corporal in turning over his orders. "What's the matter with you, Scully?" snarled the corporal. "You talk as if you'd been asleep. Turn over your orders, man, and don't keep us shivering here."

The tall soldier who was to relieve him stood patiently, with his carbine at port. Silently he listened to the mumbled words, "Allow no one to approach the stables or stacks with lighted pipe or cigar. Allow no vehicles to be driven to or from the stables, or horses taken out except in presence of a commissioned officer, stable sergeant, or non-commissioned officer of the guard. Be on the alert for fires, and keep special lookout for the sparks from laundresses' quarters when they start their fires in the morning——" And then Judkins cut him short.

"You've got 'em twisted; but *you* know them all, don't you, Hunter?"

The tall recruit nodded.

"Take your post," said the corporal. "Fall in, Scully. Darned lot of use you'd be to-night. You smell as if you'd been drinking."

"I wish *I* had, bedad," shivered No. 2. "Go on, corporal, or we'll never get thawed." And in a moment more the tramp of the foot-steps died away, and Hunter was alone.



He was warmly clad, for, in addition to the fur cap and gauntlets, heavy overshoes had been added to the soldier's equipment for winter duty dismounted, and, as there was every indication of snow, the guard had been ordered to wear them this night. Then in Ray's troop they had a knack of keeping hot coffee in the kitchen on the bitter winter nights for the benefit of their guards, and, though it reminded him but feebly of the fragrant Mocha of other days and climes, it had cheered him not a little, and he felt alert and vigorous and independent as he began patrolling his lonely post. Along the bluff to the westward the black bulk of the barracks loomed up against the starry sky. Between him and them were, close at hand, the huge hay-stacks, and then the scattered huts and cottages of the married men. In one or two of these faint night lights were glowing. Several children had been ailing, and there were anxious hearts among the lowly. But there were no little ones at Merriweather's, yet a dim light shone from the southward window. What manner of man was Merriweather, anyway? pondered the sentry, as, pacing briskly up the open space before the stables, he went over in mind the adventure now nearly two weeks gone by. Never once, by word or act, had the sergeant shown the faintest intention to seek satisfaction for the blow that had floored him. True, he never spoke to Hunter, never seemed to see him, and the accident to Stella and himself might, despite all the sergeant's protests to his captain, have been the result of his design. Once, twice, Hunter had seen Mrs. Merriweather, but at such a distance that speech with her was out of the question, even had he sought it. But she had seen him and looked long and meaningly at him, and he could not but know it. For some reason Merriweather saw fit to hide the facts connected with his absence from tattoo that night, and, so long as no one in authority questioned, it was not Hunter's province to explain.

Keeping vigilant lookout on every side as he paced up and down, the soldier gave his thoughts free rein. He was glad to be alone to think and plan. There was no glamour about soldiering as he had found it, and it was useless denying even to himself that he would gladly have recalled his rash enlistment, but, that being impossible, grit and pride asserted themselves and bade him stand to his guns and give no sign. Barring the inquisitive proddings of the men, he had had no active annoyances after the first few days. Would-be tormentors respected a man who was so free with his fists—and his money. His officers, except Mainwaring, had treated him with grave and distant courtesy, for of Brady he had seen nothing at all until this day. News from home and abroad he had had none and wanted none. It was his purpose to shut himself out from the old-world for good and all. Parents he had lost in early boyhood. Brothers and sisters he had none. Sweethearts—two. One,—the first,—his senior by at least four years, and now a staid wife and mother. The second might or might not be wearing a coronet by this time. His Grace of Lancaster was on his last legs, and his eldest hope, Lord Lunemouth, on his last lung, when Gray left Switzerland in April. That "Amy, shallow-hearted," had wedded Rokeby by this time was possible, if not probable. There were New York papers in the post library, but Hunter had seen



none, would see none. In his stern renunciation of the world, the flesh, and the devil of his old life, Trooper Hunter would admit no interest in the doings of Gotham. The one thing that bound him to the old life was the knowledge that, up to October at least, his fond old uncle was still in the land of the living. A stroke of some kind had prostrated him before Gray's return from abroad. Physicians had prescribed a long sea-voyage. Mr. and Mrs. Darcy Hunter had sailed for North Cape, had gone thence to some German spa. His health was shattered, his mind almost a blank. She was still in the prime of life. He, said the last news Darcy had of him before starting for the wide West, hardly recognized his attendants. She bore her sorrows with the patient resignation of the Christian who knows there's life for her beyond the grave—of a departed husband.

Of the remnant of his fortune Gray had still a few thousand dollars banked where it would be safe until sorely needed. Under an humble roof within the limits of Butte were stored certain trunks containing civilian clothing and things he valued. Here at barracks he had only his soldier outfit of uniform, with the addition of better underwear and shoes than were issued by Uncle Sam. One poor fellow and his suffering wife, at least, were the better for the strange coming of this eccentric: the starving tramp who boarded the train that night at Willow Springs had now a roof over his head and hers, and food, fire, and clothing. She was sufficiently recovered to take in washing, for Chinamen were unpopular if not unprofitable servants just then in Wyoming, and he, the starveling of that night on the train, was once more a carpenter, his tools out of pawn and he no longer out of work. That man's actual misery and suffering, all for the lack of a few dollars, no more than he, Hunter Gray, had been accustomed to throw away on cigars or sundries in the course of a month, had opened the eyes of the world-weary traveller and given him food for thought and spur to action.

One anxiety had oppressed him since his voluntary entrance upon the task of training Stella, a duty which need have occupied but a few days had it not been for that untoward mishap. She fought shy of the bar for several lessons thereafter, connecting it and the flapping blanket unerringly with her violent fall. Hunter's anxiety was that any afternoon when so occupied he might find Mrs. Mainwaring and her niece among the lookers-on, and he shrank from recognition. He had even sought to get his captain to change the hour to morning, but there had been fine, open weather, and Atherton lost no opportunities for battalion drills. Hunter took to these, despite the crowding and squeezing when in line, like a duck to the water, but all the same he would have preferred giving Stella her lesson when he knew Miss Leroy to be engaged at the hospital, for the fame of that benevolent young lady's work had spread throughout the barracks as well as the quarters.

And it was of her and that odd introduction he was thinking now, as he briskly tramped up and down, peering among the hay-stacks and stables. Just before the midnight call his post had been visited by the sergeant of the guard, who inquired as to his orders and bade him look

out any moment for Captain Blake or Lieutenant Brady. The midnight call of the sentries went round in rather slipshod fashion, thanks to the wind, but no sooner had Hunter shouted the prolonged "All's well" than he wished he could recall it. Not a suspicious sight or sound had he noted after the sergeant went his way, but now, before he could realize or dodge, something came spinning through mid-air, over his head, settled down on his shoulders with a jerk; then a blanket was whirled about his face, and, with his breath fairly choked out of him, with only time for one startled, stifled cry, the loop of a lariat was suddenly drawn taut, hurling him violently to the frozen ground, and in another second two or three men had thrown themselves furiously upon him. Despite mad struggles, he was bound, gagged, and kicked behind the hay-stack. His carbine was whisked away. He lay there helpless and half strangled, but they had removed the blanket, so that he at least could breathe and see. And then from beyond the stable of his troop came two more men with a cart. Into this was swiftly loaded box after box of some weighty substance, the boxes being dragged from underneath the very stack that had caused the colonel's censure,—the stack that interposed between Ray's stable and the little domicile of Sergeant Merriweather under the low bluff. Loaded with all it could safely carry, the cart was swiftly trundled off into the darkness, three burly forms propelling, two remaining close at hand. Not a word was spoken that Hunter could hear. The cart came back for another load in less than five minutes, and this time, in addition to heavy little boxes which he could almost swear contained ammunition and, possibly, revolvers, they dragged sacks of oats from underneath the stack, and loaded them too upon the cart. Three trips were made in all, then every man vanished and he was utterly alone.

Raging at his plight, powerless to help himself in any way, and suffering not a little from the sharpness of his cords and the brutal manner in which he had been gagged, Hunter managed to keep cool and think. At the utmost he probably would not be left there more than twenty minutes. When the call was passed at twelve-thirty his voice would be missed; the corporal would have to come down, and, not finding him on his post, would institute search; then he would be released and could tell his story.

Even as he lay there he could swear he heard the sound as of hoofs and heavy-laden wheels crashing through the ice on the little shallow stream beyond the stables. Presently the bitter cold of the frozen ground seemed to penetrate through his heavy clothing, and he began to suffer keenly. The wind blew but lightly where he lay in the lee of the stack, and, though he knew it was not time for the sentries to call off, he strained his ears to catch the sound of footfalls,—Blake or Brady,—and the sergeant, too, might be along again. He prayed indeed they might be, for robbery had been committed before his very eyes. He had heard rumors of the disappearance of forage. He had heard the men talk of the exposed situation of the brick magazine out there on the prairie, southeast of the post. Only on bright moonlit nights could the sentry see it from the east gate, while from the south gate it was hidden entirely. He knew that most of the ammunition,

pistol, carbine, and cannon, was kept there, and at one time quite a lot of small-arms. The ordnance sergeant slept in the garrison, his keys in a strong box under his bed, yet thieves had plundered both the magazine and the stables, and hidden their booty underneath the big hay-stack, awaiting opportunity to run it away to some reliable customer in town. That they were members of the garrison was evident from that very fact. Townsfolk would have come with wagons in the first place.

Fifteen minutes at least had he still to wait and suffer, possibly more, if no officer of the guard chanced to inspect right after twelve, or if the corporal should be slow running to ascertain why the twelve-thirty call was not repeated. Fifteen minutes, and already he was enduring torment. Then came sudden hope,—the sound of a swift, light footfall,—then a woman's voice.

"Dan! Danny! where are you? Come home quick, for God's sake. They're hunting for you now."

No answer.

Again the plaintive cry was repeated. A woman's slender form sped swiftly by, turned the corner of the huge stack, and then, as though recoiling at sight of danger, darted back, shuddering, stumbled over his prostrate body, and only with difficulty saved itself from falling. Quick as thought the woman whirled upon him, one half-stifled, nervous cry escaping from her lips.

"Scully, you beast! Why are you lying there? You are not drunk. The liquor he gave you wouldn't do this. Where's he gone? Answer, I say. Ah-h!" And the cold hands that had seized and shaken him fell away in fright at touch of the gag. Quickly she recovered herself, fumbled in her pocket, found a pair of scissors, and slashed the bands that were strangling him. "What fool work is this?" she whimpered. "Sure Dan shouldn't have gagged you, Scully. Who was with him? Who did it? Answer," she implored, shaking him vehemently. "Get up, Scully, quick! For the love of God find him! They've been to the house already—the guard. Somebody's peached. Somebody— Who tied this lariat? It's knotted like— Wait till I get a knife. Lie still, Scully." And away she sped, leaving him to wonder, bound as he was, how he could lie otherwise. She was back in a moment, panting, breathless. She sawed at the thick cordage until it snapped, then stared wildly one instant as the tall figure straightened up, then with a cry of horror started back. "Scully—No! What?—you? Hunter? Oh, blessed saints, have mercy!"

But the instant he was released and had gained his feet, unarmed though he was and half numbed, the tall, athletic soldier sprang away into the darkness and ran like a deer across the open space and on past the stables towards the stream, shouting as he ran at the full strength of his powerful lungs, "Corporal of the guard, Number 6! Corporal of the guard, Number 6!"

Out on the low bank across the narrow stream he could see, outlined against the sky, two dark, shadowy figures go scurrying swiftly by, running from the direction of the old magazine. It stood only a

few yards beyond the crest. Again he set up his powerful shout, "Corporal of the guard, Number 6!" and away off to the northeast, although farther than himself from the guard-house, Duffy on No. 5 at the east gate, sure that something was dreadfully amiss, was repeating the cry. Hardly knowing what he should do if he overtook them, Hunter dashed into the shallow stream, in hopes of reaching the opposite bank and overhauling the marauders, but the broken, slippery ice trapped and threw him again. Down he went splash into the chilling waters; up he scrambled, only to slip and go down a second time; then staggered to his feet, breathless, almost exhausted now; tumbled up the opposite bank; clambered on all-fours to the crest; gazed hurriedly about in search of friend or foe; peered into the darkness to the south and southwest, but the runners had disappeared; then gazed to the east and sprang to his feet, startled. Not twenty yards away loomed the black bulk of the old brick magazine, and, hissing and sputtering, a fiery serpent seemed dancing in front. It bounded to the door-way, now in the ruddy light dimly seen to be open, disappeared within a little cloud of sulphur smoke, and then the heavens lit up with an awful glare; he felt himself hurled violently backward; for one instant he seemed to see a million stars criss-crossing through the skies; his ears were stunned and deafened by a thunderous roar; the air was filled with flying bricks and beams and sheets of flame that scorched and seared and blinded him. Then something crashed upon his skull, and he toppled over the bank and went plunging down to the icy flood beneath.

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## CHAPTER XI.

NOVEMBER had given way to a still more wintry month, and December, cold, clear, snow-white, and sparkling, chained the streams in icy fetters and spread abroad its fleecy blanket. The holidays were drawing nigh, and garrison children were revelling in hope and whispered rumors of the great times to come. There was to be a Christmas-tree in the post hall, with presents for all the little ones. Miss Leroy was managing everything, and what Miss Leroy undertook went with a dash. The afternoons now were given up to all manner of sewing and stitching and contriving, dressing dolls and filling cornucopias and parcelling out gifts so that no child should be overlooked or forgotten, but never once did Miss Leroy neglect her morning Bible class, for such it had become, and into the fold were gladly drawn, not only convalescent patients in hospital, but volunteers from barracks and quarters who had no bodily ills, but who rejoiced in souls in need of saving. Ransom had no chaplain in those days, or sectarian piety might have taken alarm at the rapid increase in Miss Leroy's weekday Sunday-school. Two of the most devout and regular attendants of late were Sergeant and Mrs. Merriweather. Drills were suspended, it being now too cold and snowy, and Miss Leroy's hospital services began regularly at ten. She would enter, bright, smiling, happy-faced, go at once to her little desk, and open the ball. Now,

the Scriptures came first,—there was no longer doubt as to the main object of her charitable enterprise,—but when the lessons of the day were disposed of, and a brief sermon read from the collection of some famous divine, the barrack squad and Sudstown people would retire, and she could then devote another hour to lighter reading for the benefit of her patients exclusively, some of whom were still in the ward with the graver cases.

And among these latter, with bandaged eyes and burned and blistered face and hands, an unrecognizable bundle of bandages, lay Trooper Hunter, over whose head, unseen, unknown, there was hanging a sword.

For some days and nights concussion of the brain was feared. The magazine had been blown into a thousand fragments, and how many of these, beams or bricks, had felled him, no one ever knew. He was hauled out of the stream, feet first, like poor Pat Shea, bleeding, burned, and senseless. He began to mend in a few days, however, and by the 8th of December was occasionally sitting up in an invalid chair, his eyes and cheeks still under cover. But from the time his convalescence began, Trooper Hunter had spent two hours each morning listening to the voice of the charmer who charmed so wisely, and there came a day when she bent over his couch and laid her cool soft white hand on his forehead and asked him if there were nothing she could do, no friends or relatives to whom he would like her to write, and he murmured that he couldn't think of any just then, but might if she'd come again to ask him on the morrow. She came, and on the next and the next day, too, marvelling not a little at the voice, the intelligence, the language, of this particular patient. She strove to study his features, but without success, for when the doctor thought to remove the bandages the patient declared the morning light was altogether too much for his weakened eyes. He would be bandaged in the morning, though the afternoon sunshine was really more brilliant, and he didn't seem to mind it then. Miss Leroy took to sitting by Hunter's bedside as much as ten minutes at first; then the ten began to lengthen to fifteen and even twenty, and other patients waxed impatient and said things about Hunter and thought things about her that proved how jealous is the human heart, even when it beats beneath a flannel shirt. The surgeon said Hunter could soon return to his troop, as far as his health was concerned, but there were reasons to fear his health might suffer after he got there, for Major Mainwaring, now in temporary command of the post, was making frequent and impetuous inquiries. Colonel and Mrs. Atherton had gone East on two months' leave; Major and Mrs. Stannard had gone to Russell for a fortnight to visit old friends in another regiment; and here, to his huge delight, was Mainwaring in command of an eight-company post. Then the surgeon asked why Mainwaring was so anxious to have the patient out, and learned something that proved a painful shock.

"Well, major," said he, after a solemn silence, "of course you're commanding officer, but I find it mighty hard to believe that story, and I protest against its being made known to him until he is strong enough to bear it,—which he isn't now."



There had been much talk at the hospital, among the stewards and attendants and patients who could talk at all, as to the result of the board of survey promptly convened at Colonel Atherton's request to ascertain the cause of the mysterious explosion which had wrecked the magazine and ruined its contents, and it did not take long for such keen scouts and trailers as Ray, Blake, and old Wilkins to make up their minds. Coupled with what had occurred at the south gate that night, just a little while before the explosion, there was no doubt that an extensive robbery had taken place and that the object of the destruction of the magazine was the obliteration with it of evidences of the crime.

It seemed that shortly before eleven-thirty that night two veteran sergeants of Truscott's troop, returning from Butte on pass, became aware of a wagon driving ahead of them as they left town and soon disappearing out on the prairie east of the road. Now there was not a ranch or house to which it could have gone; everything of that kind lay farther down the stream, where it swept in bold curve, first to the south, then eastward again. Rumors of forage-stealing they had heard, and therefore decided to find where the wagon went, but after searching awhile in the gale and the darkness they gave it up, yet warned the sergeant of the guard as they alighted at the south gate, and their hack-driver returned with his rig to town. Captain Blake was notified, and a patrol was ordered out to scour the right bank of the little stream that flowed back of the stables. They hadn't gone fifty yards before they stirred up a squad of troopers that scattered at their approach, but one was captured,—Ray's rapsallion of a trumpeter "the Kid,"—and the Kid refused flatly and characteristically to say who the others were. A privileged character was the Kid. He had been ten years or more in the regiment, and ten dozen times in scrapes. A better little soldier on campaign or a worse one in garrison couldn't be found in all the —th, and as the regiment had spent more of those ten years in the field than in the fort, the Kid had still a small balance to his credit. He had a medal of honor from Congress for heroism in fierce, savage battle, and a record for devilry of every conceivable kind. Ray was the only man, except Atherton, he either feared or loved. Grinning from ear to ear, he told Blake that there wasn't any officer in the regiment smart enough to scare him into giving away a fellow-soldier, and Blake sent for Ray. Something told him there was mischief afoot, and Ray and the explosion came almost together.

Only two men in all Fort Ransom, however, were found to have anything to explain as to their whereabouts that night: first, Sergeant Merriweather, whom the sergeant of the guard had inquired for just after visiting sentries, and solely because a light was burning so late in his window. The second was the new trooper, Hunter, found nearly three hundred yards away from his proper post, blinded, senseless, bleeding, and half drowned. The Kid had told the plausible tale that "him and three other fellers was sneaking off to town for a lark" when detected. Merriweather declared that he had heard horses stamping and snorting in the stables, and had considered it his duty, though no longer stable sergeant, to go and investigate, and that he



saw no sentry on No. 6, but hunted up and down for him, wondering where he could be, and was so occupied when the explosion occurred. But Hunter had not yet been approached. There were reasons why it was deemed best to let him suppose no suspicion attached to him.

For, no sooner was it light enough to see, the morning after the explosion, than Atherton had some of his best officers scouring the prairie for traces. They found bricks, bullets, and unexploded boxes of cartridges all over the neighborhood, but not one of the forty revolvers and only twenty of the eighty boxes of carbine, rifle, and revolver cartridges that should have been there. Of the barrel of rifle powder and half-barrel of cannon cartridges not a vestige, of course, remained. All this was brought out by the board, and, the board's findings having been sent to Department head-quarters, Atherton, as has been said, had gone off on leave; so had Stannard, and this left Mainwaring in command.

"Not a word, not a hint to that fellow until I tell you," said Mainwaring to the post surgeon, who, an older man and a major senior in rank by several years, was nevertheless his inferior in the eyes of military law and regulation, he being debarred from assuming command. And so, as Hunter grew stronger every day and watched with eagerness for the coming each morning of the young devotee, there dawned upon him no ray of suspicion of the toils that were surrounding him, for Miss Leroy, who used to talk at home of her pupil patients, had become silent as to one at least, and uncommunicative as to all, for Mrs. Mainwaring of late had expressed her disapprobation in no measured terms, and there was no longer that sweet accord which should obtain between aunt and niece.

One bright morning the doctor bade Hunter lay aside the shrouding bandages entirely and wear only a green shade over the eyes. Orders were orders, but when Miss Leroy entered and as usual spoke to him, a dainty handkerchief was pressed to his face. The light, he said, was still too dazzling.

"But you are much better," said she, in her clear tones. "The doctor says you can soon return to light duty, probably before Christmas."

Then as she took her seat to read, her side face towards him, he slipped the kerchief a little to one side that he might gaze undisturbed.

The men had asked that she should give fifteen minutes at least to the leading events of the day, and a Chicago paper was selected for their edification. From this she chose such items as she thought might prove of interest, and to these Hunter listened, in spite of himself. First she read of the political news; then the doings of great dignitaries, foreign and domestic; and then came accidents by flood and field, and another railway hold-up on a small scale. To all these he lent but languid ear. He was watching with eager eyes the movements of those soft, sensitive, curved red lips. He hardly paid even faint attention to what she was saying, until something in the names struck him as familiar. All the foremost part of the paragraph had passed unheard, unheeded, but now, now only by strong effort could he restrain himself from sitting bolt upright in bed and reaching out and seizing

the paper and reading for himself; for what she read, when once again he became conscious of her words, was this:

"The overturned yacht now lies in forty feet of water, her taper masts and upper rigging all that remain visible. Mr. Hunter is doing well, carefully attended by Dr. Lambert at the Hôtel des Ambassadeurs. The bodies of Mrs. Hunter and her unfortunate friends will doubtless be recovered this morning. The ladies were caught in the cabin when the *Amorita* was struck, and escape was impossible. She went to the bottom like a shot. English and American residents are in deep grief. The ball-room at the Casino last night was almost deserted. Many New York and Philadelphia families are at Nice for the winter, and the tragic fate of Mrs. Hunter has cast a gloom over the community. Mr. Hunter had greatly improved in health, but it is feared this bereavement may again prostrate him. They have no children."

The *Amorita*? That yacht was owned by a wealthy English admirer of his uncle's wife. For more reasons than one, Hunter Gray had never fancied him, and even his easy-going uncle seemed to hold aloof. But Mrs. Hunter, so much her husband's junior in years, loved society, adored yachting, and what was more necessary for her beloved invalid's recovery than the soft sea-breezes of the Riviera and the idyllic *dolce far niente* days and nights under those incomparable Mediterranean skies and on the *Amorita's* dainty deck? There was a late supper going on one joyous night aboard, just as she was coming in from a day's dancing over the blue waters. There was misunderstanding between her skipper and that of a steamer over the right of way,—signals, or God knows what,—for when the *Amorita* rounded to the cruel black prow struck her amidships and ground her underneath the iron keel. Through the devotion of the crew Mr. Hunter and one, or two friends with him were rescued. They were on deck. But nothing could save the hapless banqueters still below. Darcy Hunter had survived the wreck of his business, the wreck of the *Amorita*,—had survived even his young, light-hearted wife, with whose remains, said the paper, he would return to America at once.

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## CHAPTER XII.

THAT evening when the surgeon was making his visit to the hospital the steward told him Trooper Hunter desired to speak with him, and, halting somewhat in his gait and looking very pallid still, but otherwise little the worse for wear, the tall soldier was ushered into the dispensary.

The junior medical officer, for reasons the senior could not quite fathom, had on several occasions recently asked the senior if he did not think Hunter fit to return to light duty, and gave his opinion that he was getting soft and lazy there. The post surgeon, for reasons the junior could not fathom at all, replied that he thought it might be several days before he should permit Hunter to return to his troop.

This in no wise added to Jayne's good will towards his gentlemanly and attractive patient. Hunter was fortunate in having won the sympathy of the senior. To-night he won something more.

Standing bolt upright at the door, he said,—

"May I speak one moment with the colonel, in private?"

The surgeon almost blushed as he whirled towards the speaker. All through the war of the rebellion he had served, a gallant, skilful, devoted officer, ever seeking duty at the front, ever ready night or day to brave peril, hardship, or fatigue to go with his regiment into action. Time and again he had dashed with them into battle. More than once he had cheered them in headlong charge until recalled to himself and duties that bade him sheathe the sword for the scalpel. Scorning to leave his wounded, he had fallen with them into the hands of the enemy and had starved with them at Andersonville. Once he had been seriously wounded as he knelt beside a stricken comrade on the battle-line. Twice he had been offered hospital duty at Annapolis and Washington, and declined. From one end of the war to the other he had been known among the men as the fighting doctor, and the fame had followed him to the far frontier, where in one long and fierce campaign against the Sioux he had spared himself no hardship that the humblest soldier had to endure; and the cavalry swore by him, ay, and the lithe, sinewy, hard-marching, hard-fighting doughboys too, and loved him for the love he bore them. With all he was a student of his trade and gloried in it, but most he gloried that he was a soldier. He looked it, lived it, deserved it and everything the name implied; but he had one weakness, if weakness honest glory in one's profession could be called. "I've been a soldier twenty years of my life. I've won the brevets of major and lieutenant-colonel on the battle-field and colonel for the war, but never have I been called or can I look to be called anything but doctor. Here are your paymasters, commissaries, quartermasters,—fellows that never heard a hostile bullet whistle or saw the smoke of battle,—lots of 'em; you call *them* captain or major, as though they were soldiers, but you snub, by God! the one staff corps that never leaves the fighting-line when the fighting begins."

Now, the surgeon had come but lately to Ransom. He had served but a few weeks with the —th, yet Truscott and Ray had discovered his sensitiveness and gladly hailed him as colonel. Blake promptly followed suit; but when Mainwaring heard it, Mainwaring bristled. "What right's a d—d doctor to expect to be called anything but doctor?" he asked, explosively, and he no more meant to be offensive, or thought he could be considered offensive, in his language than did the doctor in claiming recognition as a soldier. And then, as Mainwaring prided himself on "never saying behind a fellow's back what he wouldn't say to his face,"—and the Lord only knew what he hadn't said to people's faces,—what did the major do, only that very day, but, in attempted jocularly, pitch into the post surgeon at the morning gathering of the officers and try to chaff him about wanting to be called colonel! It stung the honest old soldier-surgeon to the quick. It hurt him sore, and he left the room disgusted.

And so, when from the lips of this tall trooper came the title he

valued, the post surgeon fairly blushed, for he had been thinking intently over the events of the morning, and, if the truth must be told, was wondering how he could get square with Major Mainwaring, and here was a possible opportunity.

Obedient to his superior's nod, the hospital steward went out, closing the door behind him.

"What is it, Hunter?" asked the surgeon, kindly.

"I have come to ask, sir, if it would be possible for me to return to my troop to-night, and if the colonel could aid me in any way to get a furlough of twenty or thirty days."

Colonel Connell looked up, perplexed, even troubled. Both requests were unusual from old soldiers, and never heard of from recruits.

"I fear not, Hunter. You see, there are reasons why you ought not to attempt to return to duty yet; and what can you allege as reason for a furlough so soon after enlistment?"

"Urgent personal affairs, sir," was the answer, a half-smile twitching at the corners of the handsome mouth. "Even a trooper may have them, you know."

"Hunter," said the surgeon, after a moment's pause, "be advised by me. Don't think of going back to duty for two or three days yet, and don't let any one know you wish to leave Ransom on any account, just now."

For a moment there was silence. The soldier still remained respectfully at attention, standing close to the door. The surgeon had spoken impressively, earnestly, significantly, and Hunter could not but notice it, could not but realize that behind it there was some urgent meaning or reason, yet he persisted.

"I hope the colonel will pardon me," he said. "I will not refer to the furlough again until I can explain more fully, which will be possible after I have talked with Captain Ray; but as to returning to the troop I beg that I may not be detained here through—another morning."

The surgeon was seated in a wicker-bottom office chair, which he twisted round and so squarely faced his visitor, looking keenly yet not unkindly into the pale, handsome face. It was a moment before he spoke.

"I thought you greatly appreciated those morning readings," said he, at last. "I'm sure the young lady has done very much to make hospital life bearable."

It was Hunter's turn to color, but before he could speak he had to spring aside. Into the outer hall came banging a burly form enwrapped in cavalry circular. "Where's Dr. Connell?" brusquely demanded a loud, unmodulated voice; then slap-bang, with all his characteristic impetuosity, Mainwaring burst into the room.

Direct as ever, never noting or caring who was present, he went straight to the point. "Hullo, doc!" said he, loud, gruff, yet hearty. "Just the man I'm looking for. Say, Truscott tells me I hurt your feelings this morning, and I've come to 'pologize. I didn't mean a d—d thing. It's all right. If you want to be called colonel, why,

colonel it shall be. I'll issue orders calling the attention of the whole command to it, if you like."

And then for the first time he became aware of the tall soldier, now trying to slip quietly behind him so as to leave the room. Mainwaring whirled on him in a trice. "Hullo, you're up again, are you?—Well, this man's able to answer for himself now, I see, doc—er—colonel?"

But the post surgeon had risen from his chair and held up a hand appealingly.

"He is still a patient under my charge, sir, and is not restored to health or duty as yet. I protest——"

"Oh, you needn't protest. I'm done for the present. I'm giving way to everybody this evening, all on your account." Here the surgeon signalled significantly to the soldier, and, silently, wonderingly, Hunter withdrew. "'Tisn't only Truscott. My wife's jumped on me with both feet; says I've insulted you,—done nothing but make enemies ever since I came into the —th. Why, I've been catching it right and left, doc—colonel; haven't had a moment's peace. What d'ye think that dash-dashed long-legged lath of a man Blake says to me, not an hour ago, begad? I asked him if he thought you had any right to feel offended, and he said if you didn't it was only because everybody agreed that no notice was to be taken of anything I ever said. I never know whether he's in earnest or joking. If I thought he meant what he said, by God, he'd be in arrest this minute."

Again the post surgeon held up a warning hand. "Pray do not speak quite so loud, Mainwaring," said he. "Some of my patients are trying to sleep. I beg you will think no more of this morning's incident. What you have said is more than sufficient. I am possibly hypersensitive."

And then it was the doctor's turn to be abruptly silenced. For a second time the outer door was hurriedly opened, silvery voices and soft laughter were heard in the corridor, and then, marshalled by Blake, there at the entrance stood Mrs. Mainwaring, and behind her, silent and a trifle pale and anxious-looking, Kate Leroy.

"I knew he'd be coming right over here," laughed Mrs. Mainwaring. "But, really, Colonel Connell, my husband is even more impetuous in rushing to make amends than he is in treading on people's tender spots.—No, don't go wandering off to the wards, Kate," she cried, for Miss Leroy looked anxiously up the corridor and showed a tendency to follow her eyes. "Come now, major, if you have finished what you were saying to the colonel, we want you to come home. Indeed," she persisted, as she saw how angrily his eyes were regarding Blake, "you've got to come and make your peace with us now, for you were simply unbearable all through dinner, and we had to ask Captain Blake to escort us in search of you." Then, as Mainwaring still held back as though striving to speak, she seized his arm. "Come. Indeed," lowering her voice, "I must speak with you before you go any further in that case." And then did Connell feel sure she spoke of Hunter.

An instant later he was surer still, for in came an attendant, alarm on his face.

"Did the post surgeon give Hunter permission to leave hospital? He's picked up his coat and gone, sir."

Outside the moon was shining brightly on the glistening snow. Objects were plainly visible over one hundred yards away. Mainwaring sprang to the door with excitement in his eyes and flew to the porch, the others following, in every stage of astonishment. Outside the gate, as luck would have it, was marching a relief of the guard, the men swinging rapidly by in their heavy winter dress, the carbine butts grasped in their fur-gloved hands, the gleaming barrels tossed over the shoulder. Over towards the trader's store a tall, slender form in soldier's overcoat was rapidly striding. Mainwaring's voice rang out with the force and volume of a trombone. "Halt your relief, corporal! Catch that man over yonder, quick, and bring him here."

Astonished, the corporal obeyed. "Relief, halt!" he ordered. "Come with me, two of you." Then away he rushed. "Halt! Halt, you!" were the next shouts, and all in a moment they had overhauled the offending soldier. There was brief parley, and then back they came, the unresisting prisoner between the two members of the guard.

"Oh," almost whimpered Mrs. Mainwaring, "do hear Captain Blake first. He's sure there's some mistake—" then broke off short with exclamation of amaze. From the lips of Kate Leroy, too, there burst a stifled cry, for there before them, his clear-cut, refined face perfectly outlined in the brilliant moonlight,—there, clad in the rough garb of a private soldier, stood the courteous, helpful, distinguished-looking stranger of the night of the collision.

Mainwaring must have had a love for the dramatic.

"Corporal Rice," said he, deliberately, "take Trooper Hunter to the guard-house and confine him by my order on the charge of conniving at the robbery and destruction of the magazine."

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### CHAPTER XIII.

IN the forty-eight hours that followed the arrest and incarceration of Trooper Hunter one excitement chased another with such rapidity that it was hard to keep track of them, and Mainwaring, with almost a sigh of relief, welcomed the premature return of old Stannard, to whom somebody (believed to be Ray) had given the tip by telegraph that the sooner he got back the better.

"Take this infernal regiment and see what you can do with it," said Mainwaring, despairingly. "I thought I knew something about soldiering, but there's too d—d much individuality in the —th for me."

And, beside Trooper Hunter's incarceration on the charge of aiding and abetting in the robbery and destruction of the magazine, the senior major had the following matters now to tackle: Captain Blake, in arrest for using insubordinate language to the commanding officer ("said that compared with my mental condition the magazine wasn't a circumstance in the way of a wreck, begad," explained Mainwaring to his



senior, who strove to keep a straight face, but couldn't); Mrs. Merriweather, disappeared since the night of Hunter's transfer from hospital to guard-house; Sergeant Merriweather, transferred from guard-house to hospital with a bullet through one lung and a knife-wound in the other; Corporal Croxford and Trooper Elzey, deserted,—two hitherto shining lights of the garrison and admirers of Mrs. Merriweather (could Mrs. Merriweather have gone with either of them? asked some of the ladies, or with both? asked certain brutes among the officers); and, finally, Lieutenant Brady, back from a bacchanalian bout with his kindred spirit Rawson, and now laid by the heels in quarters with an Irish orderly in attendance, for doctors would have nothing to do with him.

The way Stannard sailed in was characteristic. Brady had not been drunk on duty. He had taken advantage of the absence of Atherton and Stannard to relax the reins of his self-control, but had only got a real good start when he sought and received a seven days' leave from Major Mainwaring, which enabled him to meet Rawson at Pawnee. This was about ten days after the explosion. He was to have stayed his week away, but in two days suddenly reappeared in Butte, full of whiskey and information. Mainwaring, who knew him but slightly, received a despatch saying that he had news of most important character resulting from discoveries he had made at Pawnee, and urging the commanding officer to meet him at the railway station on his arrival, which Mainwaring did, and then the very next night ordered Hunter's arrest.

"I always said that when Brady drank he could be depended upon to make an ass of himself," said Blake, "and this proves it." But what Brady's revelations might have been Mainwaring refused to disclose. It was enough, he said, to hang Hunter high as the hayman, and the hay-contractor, in Mainwaring's opinion, was the double-dasheddest scoundrel that ever lived. This statement so rejoiced Blake's heart that he repeated it broadcast, and was in the merriest of moods, until he heard that Mainwaring had forbidden Captain Ray's having an interview with his imprisoned recruit. Then Blake boiled over and made the odious comparison between Mainwaring's brain and the blown-up building which resulted in his own summary confinement to quarters. Brady's leave had still two days to run when Stannard got back, but Stannard had heard enough of his doings in Butte to warrant the immediate action taken. An officer was sent with the post ambulance and orders to fetch him forthwith. Then and there Dana waited on him with the major's message to the effect that he would give him twenty-four hours in which to sober up and face the music, and Brady had sense enough to know he had no time to lose.

Then another snarl had to be disentangled, in which Stannard could not help, since it was purely domestic. The veteran post surgeon had had a flare-up with Mainwaring, all on account of Trooper Hunter. The doctor protested against his patient's being put in the guard-house, declaring that, no matter what the charges were, he was entitled to humane as well as medical treatment. Mainwaring said the man of his own volition had removed himself from hospital, and therefore

deserved no consideration. The doctor said if Hunter were kept in the prison room with the garrison malefactors over-night he would hold Mainwaring responsible for ill results that were certain to occur, which staggered Mainwaring for a minute. He finally compromised, ordered Hunter sent back to hospital, but put in a room by himself with a sentry at the door and another at the window, and orders prohibiting his being seen or spoken to by anybody except the doctors and the steward, unless it were himself or on his own written order.

Then Mainwaring had to go home and face the women-folk, and there for the first time (Miss Leroy, shocked and stunned, having gone to her room) did Mrs. Mainwaring have him to herself and tell him of the identification of Hunter as the polite and helpful stranger of the night on the train. Then furthermore did she add her plea to the doctor's, and finally admit that, much to her own distress and consternation, she feared Pet was actually deeply if not indeed very painfully interested in this mysterious trooper. In justice to Pet, she must say that that young lady was probably unaware of the feeling that had been growing upon her until the *dénouement* of that evening. She, Mrs. Mainwaring, had striven to wean her from the morning services, but without success, and now she knew not what had happened, for Pet had shut herself in her room and begged to be left undisturbed.

Which was more than "Pet" would permit the major to be next day, however, for she was up and on the lookout for him on his return from stables. He marvelled and was shocked at the pallor of her face, the trouble in her eyes. Without preliminary remark, she went straight to her subject.

"Major Mainwaring, at what time and where may I see Trooper Hunter, as you call him, to-day?"

"Well—I, I'm sure I don't know, Kate;" for the major, like many a lion among men, was a lamb among women. "I—don't think you—ought to wish to see him."

"But I do wish it, major. Moreover, I should be ashamed of myself if I did not." And the reply conveyed all the more weight because of the calm decision of her manner.

And so the first written order Mainwaring signed was one to permit the bearer to visit the prisoner Hunter, and at ten o'clock that morning, when, pale, calm, but resolute as ever, and smiling still, despite her sleepless night, Miss Leroy entered the hospital for the customary reading, she sent the steward to tell Mr. Hunter that she hoped he would be able to see her soon after eleven, and then indomitably went on with her self-appointed task.

At eleven-fifteen the post surgeon came, silently gave her his arm, as they left the big sunshiny ward, and led her to a door-way up the corridor in front of which a sentry was pacing,—a sentry who halted and presented arms as the doctor opened the door and ushered her in.

It was that night that Merriweather was brought back from town to the guard-house, shot and stabbed as has been said. Mrs. Merriweather had fled during the previous night, and the sergeant had been missing since reveille. It was the next night that Stannard returned and had Brady hunted up. Then came new labors and honors for

Sheriff Conway, and this time there were no troops to divide the honors of the capture with him, for his prisoners were deserters all,—one from an over-indulgent husband, the others from a not too indulgent Uncle Sam. Pawnee was the Mecca of the fugitives. Thither had Mrs. Merriweather fled to a married sister. Thither had Croxford and Elzey followed, after having remained to cover her retreat and settle matters with the sergeant,—which they had done only too effectually, for Merriweather's days were numbered.

Two days later Stannard had straightened out affairs at the post in marvellous fashion (all save matters domestic,—wherein, said he, no wise man meddled), and the man to start him on the right scent was that scapegrace the Kid, whom he had disciplined time and again in Arizona days and appreciated at his true value. The Kid's derisive and explosive laughter when told that Major Mainwaring had ordered Trooper Hunter confined as accessory to the magazine robbery, etc., had been promptly reported to Stannard on his return, and that versatile young reprobate was sent for, marched to the adjutant's office, and collared by his old-time troop commander,—for one of his several enlistments the Kid had spent with Stannard, and knew him well.

And this was what the Kid divulged. Every one knew he could use a lasso like a cowboy, and Croxford had asked him, just for deviltry, to join him and "some other fellers" in roping the swell, Hunter, on the midnight relief; and he was going to, but happened to hear that Merriweather was in it, and that set him to thinking. He'd heard the women talking about Mrs. Merriweather's boasting that she had made a conquest of the swell recruit, and he remembered Merriweather's black eye and the rumor that it was Hunter "laid him out," and the Kid scented mischief and backed out. Then Croxford came and told him it would be best for him to keep his promise, as he might get the credit of it anyhow; which prompted the Kid to tell them all to go to Ballyhack. But when Elzey and Hughes later came and "stumped him" to join them in a spree to town that night, and displayed their money, he forgot Croxford's threat in the prospect of whiskey, and, anything for a frolic, started with them, only to run foul of the patrol just across the creek.

But the moment he heard of Hunter's being hauled out of the stream after the explosion the whole plot dawned on him, and something more; for he remembered the stories of forage and cartridges being sold in town, and saw that it was planned to fix the guilt on Hunter, and, if not, to fix the crime of the assault on the sacred person of a sentry upon himself, the innocent Kid. Then Stannard would have cross-questioned the two deserters, for such they were, despite stalwart protestations that they were only out for twenty-four hours' fun; but detectives, ferreting their movements, warned him to make no attempt. Merriweather might make an ante-mortem statement, but not these men. Neither would Mrs. Merriweather "peach." She was in the county jail, begging piteously to be taken to her Danny, and declaring he and she were only going to Pawnee to see her sister for a day, and he must have been waylaid in town.

But while Stannard was waiting for Merriweather to regain con-

sciousness and Brady to become once more a responsible being, there came still another witness, an old carpenter and new citizen of Butte, who appeared at Ransom, sorely troubled on account of a friend there enlisted whom he hadn't seen for many a day,—not, in fact, since the morning of the train-robbery,—and had just heard of him as having been arrested for complicity in the robbery of the magazine. Stannard heard his story, which was that the accused was a man of means, a charitable, kind gentleman who, just for a whim, had come out to enlist for a while in the cavalry; that he had helped him, the carpenter, to a home and work and his wife to health, and his clothes and things were all at his, the ex-tramp carpenter's, house, and couldn't he see Mr. Hunter? Whereupon Stannard said, "Come on," took him to the hospital, and marched into the room where, seated in an easy-chair, was the invalid benefactor, and with him the old surgeon and the young lady. Dr. Jayne, it seems, had suddenly discontinued his attentions to both the patient and the nurse.

It struck Stannard unpleasantly at the time that no one of them looked pleased at his coming; but men are obtuse. A woman would have appreciated the impropriety of interruption at a glance.

And even while they stood there, hesitant, at the door, the steward came hurriedly to say that Merriweather was conscious, and had asked for his wife and a priest. The two veteran majors, trooper and doctor, hastened at once to the greater ward, and Hunter, smiling, held forth a long, thin, white hand.

"The ring I left with you would slide off the biggest of these fingers now, wouldn't it?" he asked.—"Miss Leroy, this is Mr. Murray, now a resident of Butte, but a fellow-passenger with us on the night of the collision."

Before the sounding of the retreat that night and the boom of the sunset gun, Sergeant Merriweather's soul had drifted away over the dreary waste of snow-clad slopes and leagues of prairie, but not before he had made clean breast of all his trials, temptations, and downfall. His vain, empty-headed, frivolous wife was brought out from Butte, but proved scant comfort to his dying hours. To Father Keefe and Stannard, Blake and Ray, he told his piteous tale, Kittie sniffing, sobbing, wailing at intervals, but ever intently listening. One extravagance after another had swamped him. He used the money of the men's Athletic and Dramatic Association, of which he was treasurer. He stole forage from the stables and sold it to a dealer in Butte to cover his shortage, but, that not yielding enough, planned the robbery of the magazine, which took place, Croxford and Elzey assisting, one furiously stormy night. They worked the old ordnance sergeant with liquor and got his keys, took out the boxes of cartridges, revolvers, etc., and, lo! the wagon of their confederates in Butte failed to come. It was beaten back by the storm. They then ran everything to the stack nearest Merriweather's stable and cottage and hid the plunder underneath. Dawn almost surprised them at the task. Luckily, the old sergeant was made too sick to go to his magazine for two days. They had arranged for the wagon to come out the next night, and then to blow up the magazine and so destroy evidence of their guilt, but again there

was failure; and Merriweather was at his wits' end when he heard the colonel say that stack must be moved on the morrow. Then, rain or shine, snow or sleet, the wagon had to come, and then it was found, too late to change the hour, that the swell recruit, Hunter, was on the very post that guarded the stacks and stables, and would be there at the very time they needed to act. So to robbery they were compelled to add assault.

The plunder was safely run off to Butte and paid for at about one-fifth its cost and one-tenth its value in a frontier city. They got their money, and felt measurably safe so long as Hunter remained in hospital, used up as a result of the fearful contusions he had received. But his wife had told them of her encounter with and revelations to Hunter, and their fears of discovery were such that Croxford and Elzey determined to desert. The news that Hunter was arrested as having guilty knowledge of the whole affair was a thunderbolt. Now in self-defence he would have to produce even a woman as witness, and that woman Merriweather's wife. 'Twas Merriweather who bade her go at once to Pawnee, whither Croxford and Elzey followed. The three men were to meet and divide their spoils in a certain saloon in town. The first two demanded more than their share. There was a quarrel, then a murderous battle. They took all he had and fled, but, with fatuous blundering, had gone to Pawnee to buy her silence, and there all three were jailed. Hunter was an innocent man.

And when this was told to Mainwaring he bellowed, "Then what in dash-dashnation did Brady mean by his story?" For Brady's story was practically this.

That he and Rawson occupied a room together over the one fine restaurant in Pawnee, and one night they were having supper in one box when a party of four railway hands came into that adjoining, talking loudly about the engineer of 783, old Jim Long, and the swell that engineered the hold-up,—how he had pretended to be out there to enlist in the cavalry, how he had tried to ride with and get points from Long, and had two or three of his gang on that very train all ready for business, but was scared off by the fact that there was a car-load of soldiers. Then when the train-robbery did take place they nabbed seven of the followers after a long chase, but never got the leaders at all. Why, one of them was right there at the fort this very day, enlisted so as to divert suspicion, and he was keeping his hand in by engineering other robberies. That magazine explosion they had read about was all his doing.

If Brady had not been addled he could have remembered that Hunter had enlisted before the train-robbery took place. But he posted back to Butte, gave Mainwaring a wildly exaggerated account of what he had heard, vowed he could bring the men with him next trip, and Mainwaring, already suspicious, had ordered Hunter's arrest accordingly.

The fact that Hunter could not have been connected with the robbery was pointed out to Mainwaring as they sat in consultation, Stannard, Mainwaring, Truscott, and Dana, in the adjutant's office that night, Blake being still in limbo, and Ray being excluded because he had



resented Mainwaring's refusal to allow him an interview with his imprisoned trooper. It was pointed out that Hunter's enlistment occurred some time previous to the train-robbery, and none present happened to think of the fact that he had asked for and obtained a pass the very night before it happened. Then Brady was sent for, and with him came his comrade, still on leave from Winthrop, Mr. Rawson.

"You hear how completely Sergeant Merriweather's ante-mortem statement has cleared Hunter, gentlemen," said Stannard. "Now I suppose you are satisfied."

"As to that point, major, yes," said Mr. Rawson, with preternatural *sang-froid*. "But I understand you have ordered his release, and he is to come here presently for his exoneration. Is that so?"

"Certainly," growled Stannard. "What of it?"

"Well, first I would ask the trooper when he comes to say where he was at the time of the robbery of the train." And Rawson's face beamed with the consciousness of calm conviction of an erring brother's guilt.

Stannard nodded brusquely. "Entirely unnecessary, Mr. Rawson," said he: "that has already been settled. He has witnesses in plenty—three, at least, here at the post or in town—to establish where he was at that very time. He spent that night and the morning following at the house of one Murray, a carpenter in Butte."

Brady and Rawson exchanged glances indicative of incredulity, but Rawson then went on:

"In justice to my friend Mr. Brady and myself, I ask that he be required then to bring with him the silver-topped flask the steward says he has there in his room this very day, and explain where he was the morning of the train-robbery, if not with the robbers."

Stannard snorted derisively, but sent the order as requested, and just as the first call was sounding for tattoo, Trooper Hunter, pallid, yet calm and self-possessed, and decidedly prepossessing, was ushered in and stood patiently at attention.

Stannard looked him carefully over, and said, "Did you bring that flask?" to which the soldier calmly replied,—

"I did, sir, rather unwillingly."

"Why unwillingly?"

"Because," and here a quiet smile flickered over his face, "it is hardly a part of a private soldier's equipment. But it has only been in my possession a few hours since my joining the regiment, and I've not had time to send it away."

Then Stannard turned in his chair and glared at Brady and Rawson. "Well, what do you wish to ask about this flask?"

Rawson rose deliberately. "First, that it be placed here on the table where all can see it; then, that I may be permitted to read this." And he unfolded a newspaper.

Very coolly the soldier stepped forward and handed the handsome toy to Stannard, who gazed admiringly at it and placed it in the full light of the lamps on the table of the commanding officer.

Then, clearing his throat, the lieutenant began:

"Among the passengers arriving in this city from the East to-day



is Lord Lunemouth, eldest son and heir of the Earl of Lancaster. Lord Lunemouth is travelling for his health, and has been advised to seek the glorious climate of California, but has met with unpleasant experiences on the way. His train was held up by desperadoes in Wyoming, the passengers were robbed, and his personal losses consisted of some two hundred dollars in cash, a superb watch, and a handsome, silver-topped flask, the arms of his noble house engraved on the stopper. The latter he valued as a keepsake. Here follows," said Mr. Rawson, "a description of the arms. Here," said he, lifting the flask, "are the arms and motto of the house of Lancaster; and now perhaps this gentleman, whom I perfectly well remember seeing in very different attire aboard the Pacific express the night of the collision, will explain how he came into possession of the missing flask of Lord Lunemouth?"

Then Mainwaring's face was indeed a sight to see, but the amaze deepened, broadened, almost overmastered him, when, with perfect composure, the strange trooper replied,—

"With pleasure; though this is not Lord Lunemouth's, but the mate to it. It was given to me by a member of the house of Lancaster months ago. At the time of the train-robbery it was not in my possession at all. For further information on that head I must refer you to Major Mainwaring."

"House of Lancaster be blowed!" was that veteran's explosive reply. "It was in my house right here at Ransom at that very time. Say, Rawson, you and Brady haven't had any more sense in this matter than—I have!"

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#### CHAPTER XIV.

A REMARKABLE winter, from a cavalry point of view, was that; the first which the old regiment spent at Ransom, but, like many other things temporal and most things military, it came to an end, and people looking back upon it afterwards declared they were rather sorry, after all, for there was so much to make it vividly interesting at the time and to form topics for talk in the weeks to come.

Sensations flattened out lamentably for nearly a fortnight after the quashing of Mainwaring's martial indictment against "the swell of the sorrel troop," as Blake described Hunter, and when they reopened, about the height of the holiday season, other names and households than those herein mentioned were mainly conspicuous, although Blake managed to mix in more than one of them. Between him and Mainwaring was patched a truce, based primarily on the latter's admission that he had probably made a mess of the whole business, but really couldn't be held responsible in the face of such testimony as was offered by prominent officers of the —th,—Messrs. Brady and Rawson. Then Blake apologized for comparing the head of the junior major to the wreck of the magazine, and peace with honor, though not without difficulty, was established so far as the men were concerned. It was, in fact, less difficult than in the case of the women, for Miss Leroy had, it seems,

a very pretty will of her own, that Mrs. Mainwaring could neither bend nor break. Mrs. Mainwaring was of an old and distinguished family, and so was Miss Leroy, and the woman Miss Leroy most seriously affected was Mrs. Blake, *née* Bryan, daughter of a rather dissolute old ranchman once well known about Russell. It stung Mrs. Mainwaring that her niece should have, as she said to her and whispered to others, so little pride. The story spread in the regiment through what was whispered, not through what was said, and Miss Leroy, already popular, became a hot favorite forthwith.

She had come to spend the winter, but as soon as the holidays were over and her precious post children had had their Christmas-tree and other Christmas joys—even before the new year was fairly ushered in—she returned from the morning reading one day and found Mrs. Mainwaring impatiently awaiting her. There were invitations for dinners, etc., extending a week, even ten days, ahead, and Mrs. Mainwaring wished to know which it was her niece's pleasure to accept, and was aghast at the reply: any that might be acceptable to aunty up to January 5th, none for her after that date, as she would then have to return to New York.

Remonstrance proved utterly useless. The second week in January saw Miss Leroy, accompanied to the station by most of the ladies and a few of their lords, safely aboard the East-bound train, with old 783 and Jimmy Long in the lead. There were dozens of the children there to bid her good-by. There were even a number of enlisted men, with whom she warmly shook hands before she took her seat in the roomy Pullman. Captain and Mrs. Blake, her devoted friends, went with her as far as Omaha, where she was to join another party. Mrs. Mainwaring fairly dissolved in tears as they kissed each other good-by; for, after all, Kate was the daughter of a long-loved, long-lost brother, if she was headstrong and independent, and never yet had woman left the dingy precincts of old Ransom so generally and thoroughly esteemed.

But every one wondered for all that—even the many who would not give their thought expression—whether an understanding did not exist, whether she was not going with the expectation of meeting somewhere the remarkable recruit by the name of Hunter, for Hunter had left on a month's furlough just ten days before.

Mrs. Mainwaring declared that Kate's sole reason for going was that she was too conscientious. She found her health restored (no one remembered having heard of it as impaired), and she felt she must return to her kindred in the East and resume her interrupted duties there. But Mrs. Stannard and other wise women well knew that the main reason for her going was that life with Uncle and Aunt Mainwaring was not as peaceful or congenial, despite their pride in and affection for her, as it should have been.

And then there was still another and more vital reason. "Everybody" was talking about her interest in Trooper Hunter and his undoubted admiration for her. But Hunter had had to go back to duty with his troop, had met Miss Leroy only on the long afternoons and evenings when he, with two or three other blue-jackets, worked at

the festooning and decorating, under her active supervision, of the post assembly hall. Then he had had an interview with Ray, his captain, that brought matters to a climax. He applied for and received his furlough in the midst of the holidays,—left his kit with the first sergeant, his uniform with Murray, the carpenter, and Butte in a snow-storm, the Pullman smoker, and familiar-looking tweeds, travelling-cap, and ulster, at which Jim Long stared in astonished recognition when, as he alighted from his cab at the Junction, a swell civilian stepped up and smilingly tendered him a cigar.

Whatever clouds had lowered over the house of Hunter were wafted away the night of that decisive conference of the powers, when Stannard and Truscott demolished the theories of Mainwaring and the aspersions of Brady & Company. Even Conway had limped out of his buggy a few days later to say he, too, had been fooled. (He was destined to be fooled still more when a jail-delivery turned loose his seven star performers on Christmas Eve.) Corporal Croxford and Trooper Elzey still maintained their conviction of Hunter's guilt, until Mrs. Merriweather weakened over her husband's death and confirmed his whole confession. The Kid was enjoying a temporary relapse into virtue, and was wearing a halo until pay-day. Mrs. Merriweather, bailed out by Freeman, was living in temporary retirement in Butte, yet already beginning to "take notice," and all Ransom was wondering what Trooper Hunter had gone on thirty days' furlough for, and betting two to one that he never would come back, when he suddenly came.

He had been gone but twenty of the thirty days. He reported in person in the nattiest of fatigue uniforms to Captain Ray just before stable-call one sharp, clear January afternoon, and in a brief conversation asked of his captain that he would send to Miss Leroy a little package he had brought with him from the East, and was manifestly disappointed when told that she had gone.

Then they probably had not met at all, and Ransom was off the scent again.

Just what might have been the result of this disappointment had matters remained in the usual midwinter plane of monotony, cannot be stated. What did happen was a sudden call from the department commander, a sudden demand for a strong escort to accompany him to the Hills, despite the biting weather, for sacred Indian lands were being invaded, and only his presence could prevail upon the Sioux to trust the matter of righting the wrong to him and Uncle Sam. Him they trusted readily enough, but shook their shaggy heads at mention of the Great Father. "Let the Gray Fox leave enough soldiers here to drive away the would-be miners and prospectors, and they would keep the peace." And so it was ordered. March and April saw the swell trooper deeply interested now, despite longings for news from civilization, in daily contact with and study of these warlike people, learning their uncouth language, buying their furs and bead-work, winning their good will by unexpected gifts and straightforward dealing. May came, and trouble. Congress was too busy with other matters to heed the request of the President that the recommendations of the general com-

manding the department of the frontier be immediately carried out. The horned cattle and other supplies failed to arrive. The Indians said, "Sold again," and scalped an attaché of the nearest agency as a hint of what might happen to the agent himself if he didn't expedite those supplies. Mid-May failed to bring the goods, but it brought the grass, and that was enough. Storm-signals had been set for a fortnight, yet the tornado burst with sudden and shocking force. Five hundred warriors swooped suddenly into the lower valley of the Ska. Out went every available man from Ransom, Rossiter, and Winthrop, and there was war to the knife ere the Gray Fox could interpose.

A "dandy" battalion was that with which Mainwaring danced away that sweet May morning, men and horses the pictures of health and high condition and eager for the field and the fray. Stannard with his four troops had marched eastward for the lower valley, but Mainwaring was to hasten to the Hills, gather up the little force still in stockade at the nearest agency, then sweep on down to join the others. The telegraph line was repaired to Crested Butte, where the mutiny began, and there came this startling message just in time to meet them:

"Sioux agency reports that Lord Lunemouth and party of friends, twelve in all, including guides, passed up the Ska *en route* to the northern hills two days before the outbreak. Use all means in your power to find and protect them. Acknowledge receipt and report action."

It was forwarded to Mainwaring by Atherton, who said he was coming post-haste to take command in person in that part of the field; meantime to lose not a moment, but do his best. As usual, the call went out for Ray.

Two days later, away up among the pine-crested heights, hot on the trail of a big war-party of Indians the sorrel troop was pushing. Mainwaring, with the three remaining companies, was trotting down into the valley of the North Fork to intercept and beat back further parties should they be tempted to follow their friends in the search for the unsuspecting tourists. Atherton, with the Winthrop battalion at his heels, was coming across country to the support of Mainwaring, while old Stannard, on familiar ground, was rounding up stragglers down the Ska, herding them back to the agency, and eagerly watching for the coming of the troops from Rossiter and the big posts away to the north. Then the Indians would be hemmed in.

But meantime what damage might they not do! There were no railways then save the few trunk lines, no means, except by marching, to reach the fabled Indian lands, and Lo was in his glory. Warned of their peril, settlers, herders, and stockmen had taken to flight and abandoned the lower valley, so the Indian was riding, proud monarch of all he surveyed, over the broad waste of the low lands, burning, pillaging, and raising, as the newspaper men first on the scene expressed it, "no scalps, but much hell." If only good news could be heard of those tourists, all might yet be well.

But what mad-brained trick could have prompted so hazardous a picnic? The agent at Brulé Springs swore he had done his best to

dissuade them, but there were three Englishmen who had never seen elk and were possessed with longing to stalk and shoot them. They were lavish with their money. Their interpreters talked directly to some of the old chiefs, Thunder Eagle and Rolling Bear especially, and the presents made these warriors caused the Sioux to clamor for more, but won a lordly permit from the crafty leaders to go shoot what they would,—the Sioux wouldn't care,—and so led them squarely into the trap. Ray had found the débris of one of their camps towards noon of the second day of his daring march, and four hours later as he sped along their northward winding trail he came suddenly upon a deep cleft among the hills, away down in whose depths trickled an ice-cold rivulet where the tourists had drunk their fill, then gone on up the opposite heights, and after them, swift pursuing, a formidable war-party that had evidently come up this tributary to the Ska hoping here to find and intercept their prey.

Men and horses of Ray's troop both were weary. They drank eagerly, and some eyes, already haggard, looked appealingly at the set face of their captain. Forty-eight hours had they come with but scant halt for rest, and there was hardly a man in the party that could not have slept instantly had he lain down on that soft, inviting turf,—all, perhaps, but the indomitable leader and the tall trooper originally of the centre set of fours, yet so often on this second day riding side by side with, instead of following six yards behind, his commander, the place where the orderly is supposed to be. Scott, the young lieutenant, who should perhaps have taken exception to such favoritism, seemed to understand and object not at all. "Hunter was up through here last month with surveyor's escort," was the explanation, and, though some men might have growled the information that "other fellers were along too," no one seemed to object, for the reason that it was thoroughly known that Hunter made topographical notes from day to day and had them with him now, and it was these to which Ray so frequently referred as they hastened on.

Plainly enough had the captain seen the symptoms of growing exhaustion on both his men and mounts,—the dark lines under the deep-set eyes, the utter silence that prevailed along the dusty little company, the painful stumbling of the horses, and the constant effort needed to keep closed on the head of column. But he knew his men, and they knew him. It was not the first by many times they had been called upon to ride with life or death the stake. Somewhere, not three hours ahead, probably, was a murderous band of Sioux seeking to redress undoubted injuries by the only method the Indian knows,—the blood of the pale-faced brothers of those that had wrought the wrong. That these tourists had bought the consent of their chief to hunt, camp, and explore through the Indian lands, that they were innocent of wrong-doing, that they despised the robbers of the red man as much as the Indian hated him, had no bearing on the case. These were white men, rashly intruding far within the Brulé lines at a time when the Great Spirit, through their medicine-men, had sounded the call to battle, and high or low, rich or poor, English or American, man, woman, or child, it made no difference. That fated party represented just



so many coveted scalps, no more and no less, and if Indian strategy could compass their capture alive or their destruction without the spilling of a drop of Indian blood, all the more would their warrior band receive the acclamations of a tribe that worshipped prowess like unto that of the prairie wolf or fleet-footed fox. Ninety strong, led by a daring young chief whose father and mother both had died when the soldiers of the Long Hair dashed upon their village some years before, they had cut loose from all bands around the Ska, and hastened in search of the white invaders guaranteed by old Rolling Bear safe-conduct not a week before.

And unerringly their instinct led them to the lovely park country on the north side of the hills, for there was noble game in profusion. Thither must the lordly whites have gone, rich in horses, arms, stores, and provisions of every kind, and for months the Sioux were starving.

It was the sight of the fresh hoof-prints of fourscore ponies that settled all question of rest at the rivulet in the mind of Captain Ray. "Men," said he, "I hate to wear you out, but before another sunrise we must circumvent these fellows, or it's all up with the tourists."

There were Irish troopers in the leading four who loved to talk of the Clan na-Gael and Home Rule for Erin and death to "England's cruel red" when time hung heavy on their hands in camp or barrack. But that seemed all forgotten now. Like the famous Mavericks, they only talked of mutiny when no other fighting was to be done. Only the horses seemed to groan at the command to mount, and once more on went the Sorrels *au secours*.

An hour after nightfall, in the bright light of the climbing moon, they had splashed through another shallow, foaming stream in another and narrower rift among the hills, two veteran sergeants, with Ray and Hunter, well out in front, when just as the foremost, a shadowy form, rode warily to a little point of bluff three hundred yards ahead, Ray's gauntleted hand swung high his scouting hat in air, as half turning in saddle he signalled "Halt!" for the leading rider was gesticulating wildly, and Sergeant Conners came galloping back.

"Treed 'em, by God, sir!" he cried, in excitement irrepressible. "They've stopped for a scalp-dance. You can hear 'em plain."

Yes, faint, but distinct, beating quicker every minute, the weird throb of the war-drum could be heard, and with it the shrill whoop and yell of excited dancers.

"Then you're right, Hunter," promptly spoke the captain. "That can mean only one thing. They've located the party over in Keogh's Park, just where you said they'd pitch their camp, and these beggars mean to jump them at dawn. We'll show 'em a trick worth ten of that, won't we, Dixie?" he continued, patting the neck of the game little sorrel he rode. "What blessed luck that they should stop to celebrate!"

Slowly, cautiously, the shadowy troop led forward to a grove of pines not far from the water's edge, and close to the sheltering bluff beyond which the warriors were having their jollification. There they waited, breathless, the sound of revelry gaining every minute on the night. Taking Conners and Hunter with him, Ray crept forward to



reconnoitre,—he and his sergeant veterans in the craft, Hunter a novice, whose heart beat wildly, but who never faltered.

Fast and furious drove the dance. Loud and shrill arose the whoops and war-cries, dying away at times like the yelp of prairie wolves to faint and distant gurgling, then swelling again like the chorus of hounds in full view of the quarry. Drum, rattle, and piercing whistle added to the clamor, echoed back from the dark, pine-crested cliffs that overhung this wild nook in the hills. Fresh fagots heaped upon the fire threw the dusky, writhing forms, resplendent in war-bonnet and savage finery, into bold relief, and Ray's brave heart almost sank within him as he counted. Ponies they could not see, for they were herded farther up the cove beyond the fire, but every indication pointed to there being well-nigh a hundred well-armed warriors right there within revolver-shot, while others, doubtless, hovered like watchful spies about the unsuspecting camp beyond the range.

"We could never get past them without discovery," muttered the captain, finally. "We're far too few to drive them. How far is it back down the valley and around to the park?"

"Not less than forty miles, sir," answered Hunter, "though it can't be more than six or seven over the old game trail across the range."

"Then," said Ray, "there's nothing for it but to send a brace of men up the heights afoot to warn the camp before daybreak, while the troop hangs on to their heels."

It was barely nine o'clock now, and high aloft on the northern side of the gorge, glistening white, the cliffs broke through the sombre fringe of pine and shone like silver in the moonlight. Somewhere ahead of the watchers in the black depths of the westward end of the deep ravine an old game trail wound and twisted up the mountain side over into the beautiful park beyond. Hunter well remembered and had traced it in his notes. Over this trail Lord Lunemouth's joyous party had evidently gone. Over this the Indian scouts had tracked him. Over this the war-party doubtless meant to follow in time to make their dash at daybreak. Over this, neck or nothing, warning must be sent, and the intermediate ground was so completely occupied by the Indians that cavalry could not hope to slip by undetected. It could only be attempted by daring fellows afoot.

And the first man to speak out when, in few words, Ray explained the situation to the troop, was that incorrigible rascal, the Kid. "I'm game to go, sir."

"Good for one," said Ray.

"Here's another, sir," "And here," "And here," came in low tone from half a dozen in the wearied troop, but Ray waited for still another voice, until, half turning, he looked as though inquiringly at Hunter, who had already kicked off his boots and was pulling on a pair of moccasins, drawn from his saddle-bags. Then Hunter looked up and spoke.

"I, of course, sir. I'm the only man that knows the way." Whereat Ray's white teeth gleamed in the moonlight, and the men knew all was well.

Three hours later a strangely assorted pair, a tall, slender, blond-

bearded man, with clear-cut, handsome features, and an undersized, weazen-faced, devil-may-care Irish lad, dressed alike in dark-blue shirts and blouses, in light-blue riding-breeches and Indian-tanned leggings, girt with cartridge-belt and revolver, and carrying the brown carbine in hand, halted for breath at the very summit of the divide between Keogh's Park and the deep gorge in the southeastward hills. Perilous, indeed, had been their journey. Leaving their comrades well below the position of the Indian camp, they had slowly scaled the cliffs to the north, then crept along among the pines until immediately above the rejoicing Indians, and then, slowly and cautiously through the scattered timber, followed westward by the stars until at last in a depression they came upon the trail, easily recognizable in the occasional patches of moonlight. Then, eager and cautious, they followed up, up the winding way, ever alert for sound of hoof-beat, until at last they reached the crest and Hunter's watch proclaimed it midnight.

From a rocky point they could see outspread beneath them to the northward a beautiful park country, faintly pictured in the silvery light, and, laying a hand on his companion's sleeve, Hunter pointed afar down to their left front.

"The springs lie just south of that high butte," he murmured, "and there we'll find their camp, if only we can dodge the Indian watchers on the way."

Ay, there was the rub, and there was no time to lose. Ever watchful, as before, they began the gradual descent, peering from tree to tree, flitting like shadows from rock to rock, until at last they reached the lower limit of the timber-line, and there before them lay an almost open valley, two miles wide, destitute of "cover" except along the stream that nearly equally divided it, and up that stream, perhaps two miles, some white objects gleamed in the moonlight near a clump of trees, and there at Keogh's Springs, just as Hunter had predicted, lay the threatened camp.

But how were they to reach it unobserved? for here and everywhere the Kid could point out fresh pony-tracks, and even as they paused at the belt of pines, away out on the slopes beyond, hidden from camp by intervening rises in the ground, dark forms of horsemen, three or four, were plainly visible, and the Kid could tell from old experience that nothing living would escape those watchers' eyes.

But up the slope the trees were thicker, and again, though wearily, they sought their shelter, and slowly crawled from clump to clump until towards three o'clock they were nearly opposite the sleeping camp, lying out there in a lovely glade, barely long rifle-shot away.

Twice, thrice they had seen an Indian on nimble pony, moving cautiously about, well out of sight of camp. Time and again the coyotes yelped and loud-mouthed challenge was bayed by suspicious watch-dogs near the tents, but still the Saxons slept all innocent of danger, and time was getting fearfully short.

"What's to hinder our crawling out as far as we can go? then, if we're seen, shoot the sucker that tries to stop us, and run for it," muttered the Irishman. "It's the only chance I see."

The moon was well over to the west, but still so high her light

betrayed every moving object in the open ground; but, as the Kid explained, there seemed to be no other way. Down went the two flat upon their stomachs, and the slow, tortuous process began. Before they had made a hundred yards Celtic patience gave out. "Damned if I can stand this," said the Irishman. "There's not an Indian in sight now. Come on. Let's run for it."

Suiting action to the word, the little sinner was on his feet, and in another minute skimming away like a racer to the goal.

And then as Hunter started to follow he saw a sight that made him thrill with dread. As though they sprang from the bowels of the earth, two Indians on swift ponies darted into view, and, bending low over their chargers' necks, lashing them to mad gallop, they fairly shot across the resounding, turf-clad prairie, swift and straight towards the scudding form.

"Look out, Kid! Look out!" rang Hunter's voice in a yell that woke the valley. Bang! went the Paddy's ready carbine in reply. Dogs, coyotes, carbines, rifles, Indian yells, and Saxon blasphemy burst upon the silence of the night. An Indian pony plunged and tossed his rider sprawling within a dozen yards of where the Kid had turned at bay, and Hunter, rushing to the rescue, had just time to kneel, when two or three revolvers seemed to crack at once, and the air was rent with fire-flashes. But the soldier's aim was true, and one tall warrior toppled heavily forward and bit the dust as Hunter sped on to his comrade's aid. He found him clasping his hands about his knee and rolling in agony on the turf.

"For the love of God, don't stop!" cried he. "They've smashed my leg, and I'm done for. There's a dozen to one of us." Dozen or not, they were in for it now. Hunter knelt, and, though his heart beat hard, sent shot after shot at every flitting form he saw, until, amazed at the vigorous defence, the Indians seemed to haul away. Then up he lifted the protesting Kid and lugged him full another hundred yards before again he had to drop him and fight. Then once more, half lifting, half dragging, he rushed him on, cheered by the evidence that the Indians dared not come too close and that camp was aroused and blazing away. Luckily, the guides had quickly realized what was up. Luckily, they reasoned that there could be but few Indians in the immediate neighborhood, for out they came—three or four—to the succor of the burdened man, and reached him only as, exhausted by his efforts and by loss of blood from a wound hardly noticed when received, he sank, fainting, to the ground, the Kid still pluckily swearing in his arms.

And so, an hour later, when the Indians swooped in force upon the camp they found it thoroughly prepared, surrounded by hastily constructed rifle-pits or breastworks, around which, five hundred yards away, they dashed and yelled and kept up their wild fusillade, but both times they strove to charge three or four saddles were emptied by the cool aim of the defence, and then, to cap the climax of their discomfiture, out from the foot-hills burst their old acquaintance the sorrel troop, "Laughing Lightning," as once the Cheyennes had named Ray, cheering in the lead. And the warriors broke for cover, and kept in

cover at respectful distance until Mainwaring himself, a whole day later, with his three comrade troops, came trotting up the valley, and then they disappeared entirely.

But meantime there had been a meeting and recognition little looked for. Four happier Englishmen were never seen than Lunemouth and the trio with him, for no other reason than that for a time their lives had been in mortal peril and they had enjoyed the unlooked-for luxury of a square fight. That exultation over, they had had time to thank the American "Tommies" to whose daring they owed it that they were not massacred in their beds. Both troopers were wounded, the little fellow profanely voluble, the tall one strangely silent. Over this latter bent the younger of the first two Englishmen.

"You are not much hurt, I hope, my good fellow? You're—Good God! You?—Gray? I vow I heard you were dead."

A faint smile flitted about the bearded face, and the prostrate soldier winced as he answered: "And you, Rokeby, I heard you were married."

Even when Mainwaring came, it was useless to resume trooper relations, for he found Hunter installed in the best cot the tourists owned, the Kid, too, in clover, despite the pain of his wound. The doctor said Hunter's hurt would not soon heal, and Lord Lunemouth vowed that both were his guests until they could be safely moved, and rather plainly intimated to the major that he considered one particular private, at least, of more account than the battalion commander, which was subversive of good order and military discipline. Then of course Mainwaring had to hear the truth, already known to Ray and rumored throughout the Sorrels, that their swell comrade was even an older friend of these swells from abroad.

"Then where in thunder was it I met you before?" growled Mainwaring, in distinct sense of personal injury, as he looked down into the placidly smiling face of the wounded trooper, and Blake nearly exploded with delight over the cool response:

"At the armory of my old regiment, when the major was on recruiting service in New York City. I had the honor of being on the reception committee the night of our ball."

"Good God!" said Mainwaring; "and yet you look just like a fellow that deserted from the Dragoons."

No, Hunter didn't rise to a commission. There was talk about it, but he had acquired other views. He is said to have remarked that the "N.G.N.Y. would suffice in the future." His wounds proved painful; an honorable discharge was asked for and granted, and there was a big time at the agency when he and the Kid bade good-by to their comrades and were taken back to Ransom in an ambulance, the Kid "rich beyond the dreams of avarice" with the largesse of Lancaster, and Gray parted with only after his promise to spend a month at the ancestral seat that very year.

Later Hunter went East. The Blakes and Rays heard from him frequently for several weeks. He was once more under his uncle's roof, once more in daily company with the bereaved widower, now re-

stored to partial health and unexpected fortune since the tragic death of his wife; but when the hope of the house of Lancaster went back to England, Lunemouth's lung in surprising working order, Gray, who might have gone, declined. The Langdons were still abroad somewhere, and Amy wore no coronet. It had somehow dawned on Rokeby that that coronet was an indispensable adjunct to the engagement, and the glorious climate of California had played havoc with Amy's expectations. There was some society talk of Gray's going in search of that lovely but disappointed damsel, and "No doubt," said he to a serious-faced, beautiful-eyed young woman with whom he was found limping along the sands one August evening at the sea-shore, "no doubt I should have gone and been refused again, but for just one thing."

"And what was that, pray?" asked Miss Leroy, a quiver about her lips despite her nonchalance of manner, for he had been her shadow since he came.

"This," said he, taking from an inner pocket a worn little glove of undressed kid. "It was dropped by my bedside when I lay in hospital at Ransom. I have been looking, longing for the hand that lost it, ever since."

THE END.

## OYSTER-PLANTING AND OYSTER-FARMING.

SINCE the beginning men have delighted in the food provided for them by the mollusks, and the shell-heaps which formed the débris of their feasts upon these delicacies remain until now in all regions of the world where Nature has produced creatures of the genus *Mollusca*.

Of all species of the mollusks, the oyster has been and is the favorite. Of these Nature has been so marvellously prolific in their development that they are to be found in abundance in nearly all seas. And the oyster-rocks have yielded a goodly proportion of the food of savage and civilized men in all ages, along the shores of their nativity.

To-day the oyster-interest is one of the most important industries; it gives employment to thousands of persons, and millions of dollars of capital are invested therein. There is a constantly growing demand for them, at present much in excess of their natural productive power: so that the increase of the oyster-supply is one of the practical questions of the time. By the application of modern methods the oyster-grounds are made to yield far beyond the natural supply; and by proper care they can be made to produce an almost unlimited quantity.

In early days oysters were to be found in lavish abundance along all our coasts. Nearly all the creeks and inlets along the sea-coast of New York State abounded with a fine quality of oysters. In Nieuw Amsterdam, in 1621, "very large oysters" were so common that a market could not be found for them, as any one could supply himself from the beds. In 1671 Arnoldus Montanus, and in 1681 Sir George Calvert, reported that the new settlements had among other advantages oysters a foot long in great plenty. Letters written about the same time contain such statements as these: "At Amboy Point and several other places there is abundance of brave oysters;" "Oysters such as I think would serve all England;" "We have one thing more particular to us, which the others want also, which is vast oyster banks, which is the constant fresh victuals during the winter to English as well as Indians. Of these there are many all along our coast, from the sea as high as against New York, whence they come to fetch them."

Peter Kalm, who wrote upon the subject in 1748, says, "The Indians who inhabited the coast before the arrival of the Europeans have made oysters and other shell-fish their chief food; and at present, whenever they reach salt water where oysters are to be got, they are very active in catching them, and sell them in great quantities to other Indians who live higher up in the country; for this reason you see the immense numbers of oyster and mussel shells piled up near such places, where you are certain that the Indians formerly built their huts." He also states that the oyster-beds were within view of the town of New York in 1748, and that the oystermen were able to earn



eight or ten shillings a day. He says that at this time the value of the oyster-fisheries of the province was much more than ten thousand pounds annually.

Very much earlier, in 1679, Jasper Dankers and Peter Slyter, in a "Journal of a Voyage to New York," spoke of the abundance of oysters in the vicinity of what is now Brooklyn, and say that they found them large and full, many being more than a foot long. Even at this time, New York oysters were exported to the West Indies, either pickled or fried, or embedded in a solid air-tight mass of butter; and Kalm says that in 1748 the exportation of fruit and oysters was a large and important business.

The sources of supply are, first, natural beds; second, planting; and third, farming. The second consists in placing the young seed-oysters upon bottoms favorable for their growth. The third, oyster-farming, is the rearing of oysters from the egg.

The natural bed is an oyster-rock. The boundaries of this rock are usually well defined, and few oysters are to be found beyond its limits. The oysters are packed so near together that they cannot lie flat, but grow vertically, side by side. In such a bed it will be found that most of the rock is made up of empty shells, the closeness being so great that the growth of one oyster prevents adjacent ones from opening their shells, and thus crowds them out and exterminates them. Nearly every one of the living oysters is fastened to the open or free end of a dead shell, and often a pile of five or six shells is thus united. The second, when young, has fastened to the end of the first, thus getting a little above the others. The first dies, the second continues to develop, and then a third fastens itself to its shell, and so on.

In regions where the oysters are never disturbed by man, it is common to find a hard bottom extending along the edge of the shore for miles and divided up into a number of oyster-rocks, where the oysters are so thick that most of them are crowded out and die long before they are full grown, and between these beds there are areas where not a single oyster is to be found. The intervening area is perfectly adapted for the oyster: when a few bushels of shells are scattered upon it they are soon covered with young, and in a year or two a new oyster-rock is established upon them.

The young oysters are swimming animals, and they are discharged into the water in countless numbers, to be swept away great distances by the currents. At this time they are too small to be seen without a microscope, and the water for miles around the natural beds is full of them. Thus when shells are placed in the barren spaces the spat young ones will cling to them.

The history of the oyster-beds of all countries is the story of their deterioration and destruction. The people, finding them in great abundance, conclude that they are inexhaustible, until they see them consumed. Upon the coast of New England, north of Cape Cod, and upon the coast of New Brunswick, oysters of gigantic size and fine flavor were formerly plentiful, but they have been so completely exterminated by tongs that a well-known naturalist of Boston, Dr. Gould, doubted whether there ever had been any native oysters in this region,

notwithstanding that all the early writers spoke of their numbers. Many of these beds were destroyed by the Indians, and others by the early settlers, while a few have survived down to quite recent times.

In the early days of our history it was not uncommon for a man to rake up a sleigh-load of oysters through the ice in a single afternoon at Shediac, New Brunswick. Twenty-five or thirty years ago these beds yielded a thousand barrels a year; now two persons gain a scanty living upon them, and obtain between them about two hundred bushels a year.

The early settlers of New England continually refer to the abundance of oysters at points where not one can now be found. In 1634, William Wood, in a work on New England, mentioned an oyster-bank in the Charles River, near Boston, and another in the Mystic River, each of so great size as to obstruct navigation. Of their size and form he says, "They be great ones in form of a shoe-horn; some be a foot long. These breed on certain banks that are bare every springtide. This fish, without shell, is so big that it must admit of a division before you can well get it into your mouth."

Native oysters were abundant at Wellfleet, on Cape Cod, at the time of the first white settlements. For more than a hundred years the town was famous for its oysters, but they became extinct in 1775, through excessive tonging, although the inhabitants attributed their destruction not to their own rapacity, but to a disease sent by Providence upon the oysters as a punishment for the sins of the fishermen.

There are extant the records of the production of the beds of Cancale Bay, on the northwest coast of France, from 1800 to 1868. These beds comprise one hundred and fifty acres, and from 1800 to 1816 produced from four hundred thousand to two million four hundred thousand a year. But in that period of the Napoleonic wars the fishing was much disturbed by the presence of the English cruisers, and the oysters increased so that the beds were in some places a yard thick. After the war the fishing improved, and the oysters were removed in immense numbers until 1843. In 1843 seventy million were taken. From that time on there was a constant decrease,—the period of increased productivity being attributable to the enforced rest. In 1868 the oysters had almost entirely disappeared from the beds. In 1870 a total prohibition of the fisheries for several years was enacted.

The experience in regard to the exhaustion of the beds on the west coast of France, in the districts of Rochefort, Marennes, and the Island of Oléron, was similar. In 1866, in the neighborhood of Falmouth, England, there were seven hundred men, working three hundred boats, engaged in the fisheries. Then, under the impression that the oysters were abundant enough to justify the doing away with the closed season, an enactment was made to that effect. The process of exhaustion began in consequence, so that in 1876 only forty boats with forty men could find employment; and they could capture no more than sixty to a hundred oysters a day, while formerly in the same time a boat could take ten thousand.

Oyster-planting is the placing of small or seed oysters upon bottoms which are favorable to their growth. There are many bottoms where there are no natural oysters, simply because there is nothing for them to

fasten upon, or because the spat has not been carried there. By planting, the number of oysters is not increased, but the conditions are made favorable for a larger number to reach maturity; for under natural conditions the young oysters fasten themselves so close together and in such great numbers that the growth of one involves the crowding out and destruction of hundreds of others, which might have been saved by scattering them over unoccupied ground.

Planting also adds very greatly to their value, as they grow more rapidly and are of better quality when thus scattered than when upon natural beds. Captain Cox, of New Jersey, cites an instance in which thirteen dollars' worth of small seed-oysters yielded, after they had been planted for two years, oysters which were sold for one hundred and eleven dollars, besides about thirty bushels which were used as food by the planter's family.

A good deal of attention has been paid to planting in Virginia. In some of the Northern States all the land which is fit for the purpose is thus occupied. In many States, as in Delaware, a great part of New Jersey, and especially in Rhode Island, the natural beds have been so heavily drawn upon that they long ago ceased to furnish any marketable oysters, and they are valuable now only as a source from which a supply of small oysters can be gathered each year for planting. In these beds the spat is increased in value hundreds of times by the planting system.

The prosperity and rapid increase of population of Staten Island were chiefly due to the encouragement and growth of the oyster-planting industry. At Prince's Bay on the island there has been some planting for more than seventy years. So long ago as 1853 there were three thousand of the inhabitants of that island depending upon this business for support.

Oysters have been planted in York Bay, in New Jersey, since 1810, and a suit was brought about that date in Shrewsbury to determine whether a man has the exclusive right to the oysters which he has planted.

In Rhode Island all bottoms between high-water mark and the ship-channel are public property, to be controlled by the State in such a way as to secure the greatest good to the greatest number of its citizens. In 1865 laws were passed allowing the leasing to private citizens, for a term of years, at an annual rental of ten dollars per acre, of any bottoms which are covered with water at low tide and are not within any harbor line, to be used as a private fishery for the planting and cultivating of oysters, whether these lands contain natural beds or not, and efficient laws were enacted for the protection of private rights. By this measure the revenue of the State has been increased, and it is stated that the rentals of the beds will in time pay all the expenses of the State government. Nine-tenths of the annual supply are sold outside the State. It is doubtful whether there is any farming land in the United States which yields as great a profit to the acre as that used for oyster-planting in Rhode Island.

In Delaware there is a law which allows any citizen to appropriate fifteen acres of ground where there are no natural oysters, upon pay-

ment of a fee of twenty-five dollars and an annual license-fee of three dollars per ton for the boat used. This system has been the source of great wealth. Nearly half of the million seed-oysters which are annually planted upon these beds are taken from Maryland waters, and they cost the planter less than twenty-five cents per bushel, put down upon his beds. These oysters are taken up within three or four months, and are then sold for more than eighty cents per bushel.

A method of oyster-planting in artificial ponds has been highly developed in France, where it is found to yield an adequate return for the labor and capital invested, as oysters fattened in this way sell for fifty per cent. more than those from the natural beds.

In 1880 the exportation of oysters from the Chesapeake for planting was as follows: three million three hundred and seventy-five thousand five hundred bushels were planted at Wellfleet, Massachusetts, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, Portland, Maine, Buzzard's Bay and Vineyard Sound, Narragansett Bay, in Eastern Connecticut, at New Haven, and in New York Bay and Delaware Bay. This practice has existed for many years, and Chesapeake oysters were taken to New York and New Jersey for planting as long ago as 1825. Gould states that forty thousand bushels were used at Wellfleet in 1840, and one hundred thousand in 1850. It is probable that for the twenty years immediately preceding the war the town of Wellfleet planted on an average fifty thousand bushels of Chesapeake oysters each year.

The exportation of seed-oysters from Chesapeake Bay for planting in Connecticut was carried on on a very extensive scale for more than fifty years, although it has now practically ceased. In those times a large fleet of Connecticut vessels was employed in this traffic every winter, and some stirring traditions remain of perilous voyages during the icy season. In 1879 five hundred and fifteen thousand bushels of seed-oysters were taken from Chesapeake Bay to be planted in Connecticut, and after three years of good management brought about such a change that in the spring of 1883 one firm shipped to San Francisco fifteen millions of young oysters which had been reared on the Connecticut oyster-farms and were used for planting on the Pacific coast. Connecticut is now able to sell seed-oysters to other States, besides sending an immense supply to Europe.

Within recent years much attention has been given to the possibility of increasing the supply of oysters artificially. The oyster is enormously prolific, a single one giving birth in one season to many millions of young. Under a state of nature millions of oysters are born for each one which grows to maturity. One of the most important discoveries of the last fifty years is that it is quite possible to save many of these by artificial means.

Oyster-farming has come to be recognized as one of the great industries, but it is still capable of almost measureless expansion. An oyster is as subject to improvement by cultivation as a vegetable. The cultivation of oysters is therefore a legitimate employment for labor and capital. This industry can be successfully carried on on a small scale and with little capital in shallow waters and near the shore; but in deep water the investment of a large capital is required.

A successful method of farming consists in placing clean oyster-shells upon the bottom, just before the spawning season, for the attachment of the young, and then placing among these shells a few mature oysters to furnish the eggs. When the young oysters are large enough to handle they are distributed over the bottom. This method has been pursued for more than fifty years in the East River, near New York City. Oyster-farming is also carried on in New Jersey, on Long Island, and in Connecticut. This is a very profitable industry: upon a French farm of five hundred acres sixteen million oysters were taken in six tides.

The whole secret of oyster-culture is to furnish proper bodies for the attachment of the young. Many methods of doing this have been devised and employed. Although the development of this industry on a large scale is quite modern, seed-oysters for planting have been raised on a small scale in Italy for more than a thousand years by the following method. About the beginning of the seventh century a Roman knight, Sergius Orata, undertook the artificial breeding of oysters in Lake Lucrine. The enterprise was successful, and its author in a short time became very rich. The following method is still employed in that region, and we may presume that it is practically the same as that invented by Sergius. Upon the blackish mud are constructed here and there rockeries of rough stones, thrown into heaps sufficiently elevated to be protected from deposits of mud or slime. Upon these rocks oysters taken from the sea are deposited. Each rockery is surrounded by a circle of stakes. The stakes are united by a cord passing from one to another, to which are suspended between each two stakes a small bundle of twigs floating in the water at a short distance from the bottom. When the fishing season arrives the stakes and bundles of fagots are taken up, those oysters are used which are suitable for market, and then the stakes are replaced. The discovery of a few very interesting ancient Roman pictures of the industry indicates that this method was used so long ago as the days of Augustus.

About sixty years ago an unknown fisherman in the East River, in New York, began practical experiments in this line. The famous French naturalist Coste soon after began his investigations and experiments in France. The American's experiments resulted in the American system of oyster-farming as it exists in Long Island Sound and on the south shore of Long Island. Coste's experiments have led to the development of the French system.

In 1858 Coste stated that out of twenty-three natural beds which formerly constituted a great source of wealth, eighteen had been completely destroyed, and the remainder so impoverished that they no longer yielded enough oysters for planting. In another locality, where thirteen valuable beds had annually yielded a harvest valued at eighty thousand dollars, only three beds remained, and these were so depleted that twenty boats could in a few days carry away all the oysters.

In March, 1858, Coste began the work of replenishing the exhausted beds on the coast of France. In an area depleted by dredging, where the beds had been so completely destroyed that they could not provide spat, six long beds of oysters were planted and buoyed out. The

bottoms around these beds were then thoroughly planted with the shells of oysters and other mollusks. Bundles of twigs, six to ten feet long, were then fastened by stone anchors a foot above the bottom, to serve as spat-collectors. Six months later these bundles were found to be completely covered with spat, and twenty thousand young were counted upon one bundle.

Two government farms were established, with a force of one hundred and twelve persons, and an area of nearly one thousand acres was stocked in the same way. In 1863, during six tides, and upon only half of the restocked lands, sixteen million oysters were taken. Land was ceded by the government to individuals, and one area of four hundred and ninety-two acres was in a few years stocked with oysters valued at eight million dollars.

The American system has grown up without direct encouragement from the government, as the result of private enterprise. The French people are generally held to be the originators of the system, but this is an error. Several years before Coste began his experiments, the oystermen of the East River began the practice of shelling the beds at the spawning season in order to increase the supply. Three years before Coste began his experiments, the State of New York, in 1855, enacted a law to secure to private farmers the fruits of their labors, and a number of persons engaged in the new industry on an extensive scale. The industry has grown steadily from that time, and the East River is now the scene of the most painstaking and scientific oyster-culture in the United States.

Thus a modern industry has arisen by which the world is being furnished with an increasing supply of one of its favorite foods. But oyster-planting and oyster-farming are still in their infancy, and are yet inadequate to the immense demand. Year after year these interests are being extended, and the time is not far away when by these methods oysters will be produced in such quantities and at such moderate prices as readily to meet the needs of the world.

*Calvin Dill Wilson.*

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LIFE.

ON the wide waste one tree stands forth,  
In whose green gloom  
The snow-bird nestles when the North  
Blows down with death and doom.

Huge forces, wind and snow and storm,  
Here meet and part:  
In the white chaos safe and warm  
There beats one tiny heart.

*Frederick Peterson.*



## TWO CHINESE FUNERALS.

IF one wants to study the Chinaman and his habits of life, to meet him in his native country would afford no better opportunity than can be found in the Chinese quarter of San Francisco. There you can follow him from his birth all along through his peculiar training, even to his grave in historic "Lone Mountain," where the early Franciscan monks planted the great cross as a guide to the missions they had established on the Bay of San Francisco; but here "John" reposes for the time being only, as the Celestial of the Flowery Kingdom believes that his bones must go to dust in his native land.

His first interment is decidedly interesting to one watching the observance of customs regarding the dead, who are supposed to be buried on the day of death. The funerals of the rich are marked by the same ostentation with which our so-called favored ones are wont to surround their departed friends, while those of the poor are characterized by the same lack of display that attends the unfortunates of our own land. The pauper Chinaman goes to his grave in an ordinary express-wagon, perhaps with one or two of his countrymen detailed to scatter the scraps of white paper along the line of march, that his spirit may not lose track of the body which it is expected to inhabit again on the resurrection day.

It was on a rainy day in 1881 that this particular pauper of whom I write reached Lone Mountain, just in advance of a grand funeral procession which the burial of a wealthy merchant had brought together. The grave-digger, a typical son of Erin, had in both cases made the necessary preparations, and with shovel in hand waited the arrival of the "express." There was not, in those days, the kindest feeling existing in his heart for the Chinaman, who he believed robbed him, to a great extent, of employment; and, further, the soil of Lone Mountain is very sandy, and graves are apt to cave in. Of course, if you have money, they are easily cleared again; but on this rainy day and in the case of this particular pauper there seemed great need of haste. Much impatience on the part of the grave-digger was shown in language with which the Chinaman soon becomes familiar, and "John" was very unceremoniously lodged in his narrow house, much after the fashion in which a ship's cargo is sent down the gang-plank into the hold. The importuning of the attendants was of no avail, and finally, in silent astonishment, they watched the hole fast filling up through the vigorous efforts of the grave-digger, who worked as though he feared the ghost might rise up and further defraud him of his rights. The last shovelful of earth went on with an air of satisfaction, for one more "John" was under-ground. The bewildered attendants scrambled into the "express," and until they were lost to view I saw them wistfully looking back, while I wondered what my feelings would have been had my dead been so rudely snatched from me. I remonstrated with the grave-digger, who passionately declared that women and

children go hungry because the Chinaman does as good work as he and at much lower wages; that he lives on rice, sleeps with the rats in a cellar, and leaves not one cent of his earnings or an improvement after him: all he makes goes to China through the "boss," for whom he is no less than a slave: "the Chinaman cares nothing for me and my welfare,—why should I care for him? But 'tis time I break up this other picnic going on in my grounds."

The wealthy merchant, not a hundred feet away, lay in state, wrapped in the finest and softest silk that China excels in making. The rest upon which an elaborate casket leaned was draped with heavily embroidered silk, and over him a canopy of equal richness hung. Now and again weird strains of music seemed as a signal for the various parts of the strange programme. Quantities of steeped tea, served in exquisite china, were from time to time passed among the women, who, on their knees about the deceased, alternately drank from their cups and wept and wailed. The prophet Confucius forbade a display of grief, but, contrary to his instructions, "wailing women" are employed thus to mourn the dead and with cry and shriek to celebrate his virtues.

The band, a conspicuous element in the scene, consisted of three wind instruments resembling our flute, and a pair of cymbals at least one and a half feet in diameter, which, if not calculated to drown the rest of the so-called music, did most effectually do so whenever brought into use. Each musician gave a sort of solo, and as he entered into the spirit of his theme seemed almost to grow gay, stepping about in lively fashion as though in the figures of some dance. At the conclusion of his part he would retire, and another would step forward to pay his tribute.

The musical instruments are of such whimsical form as nearly to defy description, though they resemble in outline our flute and violin; and the sound which they produce being an almost unheard-of sound to us, we have no English term that will adequately express it. Chinese music has a sort of softness and melancholy in its tones that sometimes pleases; but it is so intolerably monotonous that if prolonged it becomes exceedingly irritating to the nerves. They have no semitones; indeed, they seem only to blow into the instrument or twang strings at random from the inspiration of the moment. However, it appears they have notes, though their compositions are not of much scientific value. You sometimes hear something like simple melody, not unlike that which runs through the chants of savages.

The closing scene may be said to consist of four acts: that of the mourners taking separate leave of their friend, each apparently trying to outdo the other in loud lamentation; that of gathering together all the silk and china and packing away the musical instruments; that of the undertaker and the son of Erin still further removing the traces, until only a mound marks the scene; and that of the feast spread over the grave. And it would be an elaborate *menu* that should include the substantial and delicacies calculated to nourish the spirit while it lingers about the body awaiting the resurrection.

*Beulah Carey-Gronlund.*

## JOE RIGGLER'S ROMANCE.

HOW a matrimonial sheet found its way into Blue Gulch was a mystery. There was one thing certain: Joe Riggler was not responsible for its advent into that rude and wife-forsaken region. That modest and obviously taciturn prospector of a young but fruitful territory had never even heard of this simple and expeditious method of solving Nature's complicated puzzle, and was plodding indifferently along over a most unromantic stretch of dry grass and cobble-stones, philosophizing on the advisability of baked beans and hash or of slap-jacks and fried pork as the more suitable refreshment for Captain Strong's mining camp on this particular night. He was rather in favor of the hash and beans so far as he was concerned, but he remembered that Pete Todkins had inadvertently remarked the night previous that "beans wuz all right in their place, Boston, fer instance, but there wuz such a thing ez their bein' overdid;" and it further occurred to him, as a still more forcible argument, that the "beans wuz runnin' low." He might have continued to philosophize on such momentous questions as this for the remainder of his eventful career, or, in the vernacular to which he was more accustomed, until he "wunk out;" but just at the instant when he made the final decision in favor of Todkins's preferences and in sacrifice of his own, a newspaper, torn and discolored from long flirting with the wind, flung itself, as with a last mighty effort towards recognition, into the sturdy miner's face, and dropped at his feet.

Afterwards, when the natural sequence of events had passed and time had stretched out sufficiently into the future to allow Joe to return to his former philosophical view of life, he came to the stupendous conclusion that it was Fate. But that was afterwards. Now, he simply picked up the inoffensive-looking sheet, bent and rolled and slapped it into as small a compass as possible, and stuffed it with considerable force into the capacious pocket of his threadbare and mud-bespattered pantaloons. Why he should have been sufficiently interested to preserve the stray vender of Cupid's wares, he could hardly have told: he was blissfully unconscious of its purpose, for he had not even glanced at a head-line: he might have had some ill-defined notion of its usefulness as a rouser of the shanty fire, which occasionally gave evidence of unmistakable stubbornness: or he may have thought of it as a curiosity worth presenting to the camp, since a newspaper had never before been seen within the limits of Blue Gulch. He certainly had no intention of reading it.

In the long enrolment of events which Joe subsequently set down to the account of Fate, he gave precedence, both as to time and importance, to the fact that he got the supper that night. Had it been Pete Todkins's or Lafe Dickson's or Lanky Jake's turn to prepare the evening meal, Joe would have stayed up the gulch washing sand until dark, and one or other of the aforesaid worthies would, fortunately or

unfortunately as the case might prove, have discovered the portentous document which Joe carried so complacently in his trousers-pocket, and, in consequence, deprived our hero of his romance by quietly assuming the primal position himself.

Joe got the supper, and, another fateful thing, Joe got it early. He had to wait for the boys. In waiting, he sat down on the triangular rock that served as a door-step to Captain Strong's mansion, and leaned his back against a convenient post. Something conflicted with his position as one of perfect ease, and, on investigation, he drew forth from the depths of the before-described pocket the well-pressed periodical which Fate had facetiously placed there. He flung it on the ground with a condemnatory ejaculation not commonly reported in refined circles, and then, calmly lighting his pipe, resumed his former position against the post.

As the aromatic clouds rose higher and higher above his head and enveloped him in their tranquillizing redolence, his eyes wandered up and down the gulch and around the camp, and finally, with as much indifference as they had lent to any one of the familiar objects of the locality, rested placidly on the much despised "Heart's Counsellor." "Marriage Made E—," in large type, lay directly before his vision. As Joe carelessly spelled out the words and slowly comprehended their significance, his masculine curiosity was aroused. He picked up the paper, unfolded it with greater deference than he had previously thought necessary to expend upon it, and resigned himself to a studied perusal of its fascinating contents.

"Marriage Made Easy." Under this alluring head-line ran column after column of solicitations for correspondence. Joe worked his way slowly through three or four advertisements for a wife, dumfounded at the audacity of the thing, and then he came to the following interesting paragraph:

"I am just nineteen, and, my friends say, pretty. Have large dark-brown eyes and wavy brown hair. Would like the acquaintance of a Western gentleman of means. Object matrimony. Molly. Address 999 'Heart's Counsellor.'"

No doubt there were any number of girls of superior attractions described in the columns that followed, but Joe did not get below Molly's modest notice. He read it over again, slowly and carefully.

"Hum. Wants to get married," he thought, audibly. "So that's the way they do things nowadays. World's progressin', I'm a-thinkin', since I lost myself in Blue Gulch. And she wants a Western gentleman. Wonder if she ever heard of Blue Gulch."

Then he stopped. What he thought after that did not shape itself into words. Approaching voices warned him that the caterer of Captain Strong's mining camp was neglecting his duties. He thrust the "Heart's Counsellor" again into his accommodating pocket, and proceeded to serve the "grub."

At daybreak the next morning a thin, raw-boned excuse for a horse might have been seen picking its way through the defiles of the circuitous route that led up out of Blue Gulch to Latah City. Lest the reader imagine a thickly populated community, I will state that Latah

City at this time consisted of a post-office with drug-store attached, three saloons, and a blacksmith-shop. There was some talk of a provision-store, but it had not yet materialized.

The rider of the horse seemed lost in profound meditation. A dark scowl lent a decidedly savage look to a face not prepossessing under the happiest of conditions, and the spurs frequently pressed into the scrawny flanks of the worn-out steed indicated a restless, impatient frame of mind.

Yet this early morning traveller was not plotting murder or robbery, or even the jumping of a brother miner's claim. It was simply Joe Riggler studying out the proper wording of a very important missive.

He was greeted at the entrance of the city with loud shouts of welcome from the three representatives of the main institutions of the place, but he rode indifferently by, greatly to the astonishment of his would-be hosts.

"Must be expectin' a letter," was the final verdict as he drew up in front of the post-office and alighted. He remained inside fully an hour, then rushed out, jumped on his waiting beast, and galloped past the open-mouthed saloon-keepers as if on an errand of life or death.

In the course of the forenoon first one and then another of the astonished citizens strolled over to the post-office and inquired casually if Joe got his letter. The postmaster said he guessed not, and vouchsafed the information that he believed Joe mailed one.

Joe was as "glum as an owl," as Lanky Jake expressed it, for a week after his return from Latah City. There was considerable conjecture in the camp concerning that early morning ride, but Joe's manner did not encourage inquisitiveness, and it was finally set down to a sudden and uncontrollable fit of thirst, with which the miners were sometimes afflicted, and was soon forgotten.

Some three weeks had elapsed, when Joe's horse was again missing from Captain Strong's stables and Joe did not appear at breakfast. Towards noon the short-winded steed came wheezing into Blue Gulch and drew up near the point where Pete Todkins was cradling out sand. Joe's face was radiant with smiles, or, as Todkins that night informed the camp, "he looked ez good-natered ez a chipmunk." Pete did not hesitate to address him.

"Hello, Joe. Where yer ben ter?"

"Post-office."

"Git a letter?"

"Yes."

"Good news?"

"Yes."

"Somebody died and left you a pile?"

"No."

Several other questions failed to elicit further information.

The mysterious trips to Latah City continued at intervals of three or four weeks all summer. Joe would occasionally let drop some obscure remark that greatly aroused the curiosity of the camp and was

the cause of considerable comment. If asked to take a drink, which of course involved a return treat, he invariably answered, "Can't do it, pard. Got ter save me dust." A total abstainer in Blue Gulch was a novel phenomenon.

Towards the latter part of the summer Joe "struck it rich." With every addition of the yellow dust the change in him became more apparent. One night he astonished the camp by the announcement that he was "goin' to lay off" the next day. Still more astounded were they, on returning at night, to discover that a new shanty had been added to the colony. After that Joe had no more time to sit around the fire and play "seven-up" and listen to Sailor Bill's sea yarns. Every evening was spent in the shanty, driving nails and whittling out knobs for the odd little cupboards made ready for the reception of imaginary viands cooked by dainty fingers.

Notwithstanding the fact that Joe kept his own counsel, the mysterious shanty established the belief that he was going to "git spliced," and when Joe asked the loan of Captain Strong's "hack" for a trip to Littleton, and returned three days later with a load of provisions and tinware and crockery, the like of which had never been seen within the confines of Blue Gulch, the belief became a fixed certainty.

Finally the curiosity of the camp to know the exact condition of affairs became intolerable. If a woman was coming to Blue Gulch, Blue Gulch wanted to know it. Pete Todkins, as more particularly Joe's partner in fortunes, was appointed a committee of one to investigate.

That night Todkins called upon the perplexing miner in the dignity of his new quarters, and, without an apology, walked in and took a seat. Joe was perched on a trestle, vigorously driving in a row of nails for the future accommodation of sundry feminine garments, and whistling.

"Seems ter me yer gittin' wonderful select," ventured Pete.

"Yes," Joe replied, good-humoredly.

"The old camp ain't good enough fer you."

"No—aw—the camp's all right."

Pete pulled himself together and struck out boldly. "Some of the boys air sayin' that yer goin' ter git spliced."

Joe grinned knowingly.

A dead silence; then Joe grew confidential.

"I tell yer what 'tis, Pete," he said. "A man gits tired o' livin' unless he's got somebody that sorter belongs to him and depends on him to take care on 'em. What's the use o' pannin' out dust all yer life if nobody but Jim Clark gits the benefit of it?" (Jim Clark was the proprietor of Latah City's most popular resort.) "I'm tired of it. That's all I've got ter say. I'm tired of it." And all Todkins's carefully premeditated inquiries failed to draw out further definite information.

But after that Joe was somewhat less reserved in the camp, and occasionally remarked that he "wouldn't hev to cook his own grub much longer," or, he "pitied the feller thet hed to sew on his own



buttons all his life," or, it was "much more comfort'ble livin' in a house you could call yer own, specially if you hev good company."

In the latter part of October Joe came home from one of his early morning trips to Latah City in unusually hilarious spirits. He shook hands with the boys all around and told them to congratulate him, but when they asked "What for?" he simply grinned and said it was "all right."

That night he again asked Captain Strong for the loan of his "hack," and if the camp had been up in time the next morning it would have had fresh cause for astonishment in the appearance of Joe Riggler in store clothes. But by the time the most industrious gold-washer was astir Joe was far on his way to Littleton.

Littleton did not possess a railroad. It did possess a steamboat, which once in three days brought provisions and occasional passengers from up the river. Joe arrived five hours before the steamer was due, and nearly worried the life out of the inexperienced agent, recently sent on from Boston, in his effort to kill time. He was strongly tempted to celebrate the occasion by going on a spree; but he abandoned that idea as unworthy the store clothes and the expected arrival. So he stood around the docks, when the gentleman from Boston succeeded in evading him, and waited.

Noon passed by unnoticed. Joe couldn't eat under such a burden of suspense and expectation. Three o'clock came, and he gazed eagerly up the river for a glimpse of the Winona. No boat in sight. He walked back to the Boston head-quarters, and inquired, in as off-hand a manner as his dejected spirits would allow, "Didn't yer say that steamboat would be here at three o'clock?"

"Yes. Want a ticket?"

"No, but she ain't here."

"Well, don't worry, old man," said the agent, condescendingly; "she'll be along directly."

Joe hurried back to the landing, fearful of missing the first glimpse of the Winona as she rounded the bend. Twenty minutes or so more, and he was rewarded by a puff of blue smoke, immediately followed by the shrill scream of the whistle, and the Winona steamed leisurely into sight.

"I'm as narvous as that brown filly o' Clark's," Joe muttered. "Guess I better not act quite so anxious." And he strolled over to the station and tried to content himself with a view from a distance. But when the Winona was securely tied to the dock and the boat-hands had begun to trundle off her cargo, with no sign of a feminine passenger, Joe could stand it no longer.

He returned to the landing and started in search of the captain, when a smooth-faced, stylishly attired young gentleman appeared over the gang-plank.

"Tenderfoot, and a young one et that," was Joe's half-muttered comment as he passed.

A second later, before Joe succeeded in getting an audience with the captain, the stranger touched him on the arm.

"Are you Joseph Riggler?"

"Thet's my name."

"Joseph Riggler of Blue Gulch?"

"You're right."

"You were expecting a friend on this boat?"

Joe drew back amazed.

"How in thunderation did you know thet?"

The stranger's countenance showed some signs of embarrassment as he repeated, nervously, "You said your name was Joseph Riggler,— Joe Riggler."

"Yes, d—n you. How many times do you hev to be told?"

"Well," said the stranger, with a cumulative effort, "I'm Molly."

Joe staggered back a pace, and his long, lank arms with their bony extremities hung lifeless at his sides. His under jaw dropped; his pale blue eyes took on a look half indignant and half idiotic as the knowledge slowly dawned upon his dull comprehension. Finally he recovered enough to inquire, weakly, "What yer givin' me?"

"The truth, pure and unadulterated." Then, seeing a menacing glare appear between Joe's sandy lashes, he continued, hurriedly, "See here, Mr. Riggler. It's this way. I'm going to make a clean breast of the whole affair, and then if you choose to annihilate me on the spot you are at liberty to do so. I didn't inherit a fortune, and there was no chance of my making one back East without a pull. I wanted to come West awfully, and I didn't have the requisite cash, and when you offered to send it on I couldn't resist taking it. I didn't think of such a thing when I began the correspondence. That personal I inserted just for fun, to see how many answers I would get; but when your first letter came it was so strikingly original—different from the common run, you know—that I thought I would keep it up awhile. Then came your offer to pay my expenses out here, and I took you up. But you needn't think I intended to defraud you of that money. I shall pay back every cent as soon as I can earn it. I'm going to stay right here in Littleton——"

"Not much," Joe growled. The young fellow trembled and looked anxiously at the hand concealed under the swallow-tails of the store clothes. He waited, expectant.

"Not much," Joe repeated. "You're goin' to Blue Gulch with Joe Riggler, and you're goin' ter cook Joe's grub and sew on Joe's buttons and take care o' thet shanty I fixed up fer you. Do you s'pose I'm goin' ter hev the hull o' Bill Strong's minin' camp laughin' in their sleeves at my expense? Not by a blamed sight. You're goin' along with me, and I'll interduce you as my nevvvy from the East, and then Pete Todkins, who's ben so sure o' my gittin' spliced, 'll think the joke's on him. Pile into thet hack there." And the glittering end of an ominous-looking something appeared from under the swallow-tails.

Blue Gulch never quite recovered from its disappointed surmises. From the day of Joe Riggler's return with his "nevvvy," he was held in highest esteem as the only man who had ever been able to "fool the hull d—d camp."

*Elsie A. Robinson.*

## ANIMAL CANNONEERS AND SHARP-SHOOTERS.

ALTHOUGH the animals concerning which I wish to write in this paper do not use powder and ball in charging their weapons, they do use materials which, if not so deadly, are yet very efficient missiles. I am inclined to believe that the Chinese borrowed one of their defensive as well as offensive weapons, the stink-pot, from one of the lower animals,—namely, the bombardier beetle.

I well remember that, when a lad, I once experienced the overpowering effects of a Chinese stink-pot which had been brought from China by a missionary. This gentleman, who was a practical joker, ignited this instrument of barbaric warfare and placed it on a table in the hall of the house where I happened to be visiting. In a very few moments the house was emptied of all its inhabitants, who fled, coughing and strangling, out into the open air.

I remember distinctly that I likened the effluvia that escaped from this horrible weapon to the odor of the "stink-bug," an insect belonging to a family (*Pentatomidæ*) genera of which exist throughout the entire world.

Professor Comstock pleasantly calls attention to this family of animal bombardiers in the following words: "To those who live in cities it may always remain a mystery why one berry, looking just like another, should taste and smell so differently; but all barefooted boys and sunbonneted girls from the country who have picked the wild strawberries on the hill-sides or scratched their hands and faces in raspberry patches know well the angular green or brown bugs that leave a loathsome trail behind them; and they will tell you, too, that the bugs themselves are worse than their trail, for it is a lucky youngster that has not taken one of these insects into his mouth by mistake with a handful of berries."

The common brown bombardier, stink-bug, or sour-bug, is an animal of no little intelligence, as any one who has watched its manœuvres when in the presence of an enemy will readily admit. On such an occasion the bombardier reminds one of a man-of-war that is manœuvring for a favorable position when about to engage in a naval combat. It endeavors to keep the side of its body toward the enemy, for its artillery is placed on the lower side of its body, one, two, sometimes three, small weapons on each side. When the enemy has come within range, this astute little warrior elevates the side of its body that is next to its foe, thus bringing its guns to bear, and then fires a broadside of acrid, ill-smelling fluid at its opponent. If its molester still continues its attacks, the bombardier will quickly turn, elevate its other side, and fire its remaining broadside. The stink-bug is commonly victorious at its first volley; but sometimes the enemy is persistent and continues to harass this insect hurler of stink-pots until the creature exhausts all its ammunition. What does it do then? It resorts to a subterfuge that is practised by many other animals, even by man him-

self: it feigns death. It draws its legs beneath its body, retracts its antennæ, and sinks to the ground, to all appearance as dead as Shakespeare's famous door-nail. Its foe, believing that it is dead, abandons it, for it seems a silly and useless procedure to maltreat and mutilate a dead opponent. The cunning stink-bug, as soon as its enemy departs, comes to life, and in a half-hour is ready for another combat, so quickly does it acquire another supply of ammunition. The bombardier's cannon are small glands situated on the lower side of the body near the middle legs. These glands secrete an acrid, fetid fluid, which by a voluntary effort of the animal is ejaculated at its enemy.

A South American bombardier takes precedence, however, of all insect cannoneers, inasmuch as its broadsides are accompanied by both sound and smoke. Mr. Westwood, a distinguished English entomologist, quotes Burchell as stating that "while resting for the night on the banks of one of the large South American rivers, he went out with a lantern to make an astronomical observation, accompanied by one of his black servant boys; and as they were proceeding, their attention was directed to numerous beetles running about upon the shore, which, when captured, proved to be specimens of a large species of *Brachinus*. On being seized, they immediately began to play off their artillery, burning and staining the flesh to such a degree that only a few specimens could be captured with the naked hand, leaving a mark which remained a considerable time. Upon observing the whitish vapor with which the explosions were accompanied, the negro exclaimed in his broken English, with evident surprise, "Ah, massa, they make smoke."

Another beetle, belonging to a different family (*Paussidæ*), is an accomplished cannoneer. This insect has been described by Captain Boyes, an English naturalist, who noticed that it discharged a fluid acidulous in scent and having caustic properties. The discharges were accompanied by sound and vapor. Says he, "A circumstance so remarkable induced me to determine its truth, for which purpose I kept it" (a *Paussus*) "alive till the next morning, and, in order to certify myself of the fact, the following experiments were resorted to. Having prepared some test-paper by coloring it with a few petals of a deep red oleander, I gently turned the *Paussus* over it, and immediately placed my finger on the insect, at which time I distinctly heard a crepitation, which was repeated in a few seconds on the pressure being renewed, and each discharge was accompanied by a vapor-like steam, which was emitted to the distance of half an inch, and attended by a very strong and penetrating odor of nitric acid."

But the strangest cannoneer in the entire animal kingdom is a naked mollusk called *onchidium*. It inhabits the sea-shores of China and Japan, of the Malayan Archipelago, of North Australia, and of East Africa. This animal is shell-less, but its back is covered by a coriaceous or leather-like integument. The cephalic or head eyes of *onchidium* differ in no ways from those of allied groups, but its dorsal eyes (and it commonly has from twelve to sixty, one species having even as large a number as eighty, according to Lubbock; another species, according to Semper, has ninety-eight) are identical, as far as type is concerned, with those of vertebrate animals. These dorsal eyes

have cornæ, retinæ, and lenses, anterior and posterior chambers, and "blind-spots." The "blind-spot" is peculiarly characteristic of the vertebrate eye: the optic nerve pierces the external layer of the retina; hence at this point sight is absent.

Now, of what use are these twelve, sixty, or ninety-eight eyes in the back of this creature, staring up, as they do, in all directions? They must subserve some useful purpose, otherwise they would not be present; and they do, as I shall now endeavor to show.

Wherever you find the onchidium you will be certain to observe likewise a very peculiar fish whose family name is *Periophthalmus*. This fish has the habit of leaving the water and coming out on shore, where it seeks its food, being enabled by its long ventral fins to make its way over the sands very rapidly in successive leaps, and onchidium is its favorite food. The coriaceous back of this mollusk contains a multitude of glands which secrete a thick, tenacious substance, almost a concretion, in fact. In some preserved specimens that I examined not long ago, the contents of these glands were concretions, resembling minute shot. The preserving fluid, however, may have been instrumental in hardening the contents of the glands. The integumental pores of these glands are exceedingly small. Now, when *Periophthalmus* comes leaping over the sands, bounding several inches into the air at each leap, the staring dorsal eyes of onchidium catch sight of the enemy. Immediately the mollusk contracts the coriaceous skin of its back and discharges thousands of viscous pellets from its dorsal glands at its foe. *Periophthalmus*, now alarmed and dismayed (overwhelmed, as it were, by this shower of shot from a masked battery), turns and flees for its life, and the watchful onchidium is saved from a deplorable fate. *Periophthalmus* itself is a very uncanny-looking creature, with its pair of great staring eyes situated in the top of its head. As it leaps along the sea-shore, using its ventral fins as legs, it looks like some strange goblin from the depths of the ocean, that has come ashore on mischief bent. No wonder onchidium greets it with a shower of shot.

There are several families of very proficient sharp-shooters among the lower animals; the most expert, however, of them all is to be found in a family of fishes genera of which are found in several localities both of the Old and the New World. These fishes are wonderful marksmen, and seldom fail to bring down the object at which they aim. Their weapons are their long, peculiarly-shaped muzzles, and their bullets are drops of water. The fish, after sighting its quarry, slowly swims to a favorable position within range; it then rises to the surface, protrudes its muzzle, and, taking rapid aim, zip! fires its water bullet and knocks its prey into the river. The struggling insect is gobbled down instantan, and the fish then proceeds in search of other game.

On one occasion, while I was watching some catfish that were swimming close to the shores of a pond, one of them gave a sudden flirt with its tail, thereby throwing a shower of water on a wasp which was busily engaged in digging out a pellet of clay. This unexpected down-pour washed the wasp into the pond, whereupon it was immediately snapped up by the wily catfish. Whether or not this tragedy was the

result of deliberate premeditation on the part of the fish I am not prepared to state; yet, taking everything into consideration, I firmly believe that it was.

The llama of South America is an expert marksman, though it never uses its craft in the procurement of its food. Only when annoyed and angry does it give an exhibition of its wonderful skill in hitting the object aimed at. The llama's weapon is its mouth: its bullet is composed of saliva and chewed hay.

Several years ago, at the Fair Grounds in St. Louis, I witnessed an exhibition of this creature's powers of expectoration, in which the victim was a country beau, who came very near losing his sweetheart thereby. This young man was one of those self-sufficient individuals who imagine that knowledge sits enthroned in the temples of their own personal intellects; that "what they do not know is not worth knowing." He was annoying the llama (the animal stood in the centre of its pen, probably fifteen feet or more from its tormentor) by throwing clods of dirt at it and by beating on the rails of the pen with his cane.

I saw by the creature's actions that it was angry; the rapid movements of its jaws indicated that it was preparing to attack its persecutor. I warned the young man, telling him what to expect; his sweetheart begged him to desist and to come away. But he treated my warning with derision, and told the girl that "he knew his business." Suddenly there came a whizzing, whistling noise, followed by a sharp spat: the young wiseacre lay supine upon his back with his eyes and forehead plastered with a disgusting mixture of saliva, hay, and mucus.

"I hate a fool!" said the girl, as she shouldered her parasol and walked away.

I saw them again in the monkey-house some time afterward, but the man was a changed being: he had learned his lesson in decorum; he had been taught modesty by the good marksmanship of a llama.

*James Weir, Jr.*

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### MATRIMONIAL DIVINATIONS.

**D**UMB-CAKE, a mystical ceremony whose origin is lost, is still a popular and much trusted form of matrimonial investigation, and special days are specially favored for this process of divination. Halloween (October 31) and St. John's Eve (June 23) are the universally popular choice, but on St. Agnes' Eve (January 20), St. Valentine's Eve (February 13), St. Mark's Eve (April 24), or St. Faith's Eve (October 6) one can also bake the dumb-cake with potent effect. It is to be concocted and employed thus. The party of girls must number three, and absolute silence must prevail through the whole of the operation.

Two make it,  
Two bake it,  
Two break it.



At midnight each maid eats a portion of the cake and takes a portion in her hand, walks to bed backward, and sleeps with the dumb-cake under her pillow. Of course she sees plainly in her dreams her future husband. On St. Faith's Day the custom somewhat varies: the cake must be made of water, flour, sugar, and salt. The cake must be turned three times by each person during the baking. It is then divided into long strips and passed through a wedding-ring borrowed from a woman who has been married at least seven years. All this in silence, but as the husband-hunter eats her dumb-cake she says,—

"O good St. Faith, be kind to-night,  
And bring to me my heart's delight.  
Let me my future husband view,  
And be my vision chaste and true."

Then all three maids get into bed together with the wedding-ring tied to the head of the bed. Three widows can also try this charm.

In the "Journal of the Young Lady of Virginia" we find the gay group of young Southern beauties, with much fear and trembling, eating the "dum-cake" in Mr. Washington's house.

On various saints' days vast opportunity was given for matrimonial divination. In "Aubrey's Miscellanies" we read,—

"The women have several magical secrets handed down to them by tradition, as on Saint Agnes' night, 21st January. Take a row of pins and pull out every one, one after another, saying a Pater Noster, sticking a pin in your sleeve, and you will dream of him or her you shall marry. You must be in another county, and knit the left garter about the right-legg'd stockin (let the other garter and stockin alone), and as you rehearse these following verses, at every comma knit a knot:

"This knot I knit,  
To know the thing I know not yet,  
That I may see  
The man that shall my husband be,  
How he goes and what he wears,  
And what he does all the days."

Accordingly in your dream you will see him, if a musician, with a lute or other instrument; if a scholar, with a book," and so on.

Another dream-charm for St. Agnes' Eve was to take a sprig of rosemary and another of thyme and sprinkle them thrice with water, then place one in each shoe, and stand shoe and sprig on either side of the bed, repeating,—

"St. Agnes, that's to lovers kind,  
Come ease the trouble of my mind."

In many places the notion prevailed that to insure the perfection of these charms the day must be spent fasting. It was called "St. Agnes' fast."

Keats's beautiful lines commemorative of the day seem doubly exquisite when read after conning the clumsy folk-rhymes:

They told me how upon St. Agnes' Eve  
 Young virgins might have visions of delight,  
 And soft adorings from their loves receive  
 Upon the honey'd middle of the night,  
 If ceremonies due they did aright:  
 As supperless to bed they must retire  
 And couch supine their beauties lily white;  
 Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require  
 Of heaven, with upward eyes, for all that they desire.

In Scotland the lasses sow grain at midnight on St. Agnes' Eve, singing,—

"Agnes sweet and Agnes fair,  
 Hither, hither now repair.  
 Bonny Agnes, let me see  
 The lad who is to marry me."

And the figure of the future sweetheart appears as if reaping the grain.

I cannot recall ever having seen in my school-days any matrimonial divining tests save one. It was this. A key was placed in the Bible at the second chapter of Solomon's Song, verses 16 and 17, and the book tied firmly together, with the handle of the key left beyond the edges of the leaves. The tips of the little finger of the charm-tester and of a friend were placed under the side of the key, and then they "tried the alphabet" with the verses above named: that is, they began thus: "A. My beloved is mine, and I am his. He feedeth among the lilies. Until the day break and the shadows fall away, turn, my beloved," etc. At the word "turn" the Bible was supposed to turn around if A were the first letter of the lover's name. Thus could the entire name be spelt out. I am sure I was not more than eight years old when I saw this charm tried, but I distinctly recall the uncanny chill I felt when the Bible slowly turned and fell from the fingers of the girls who were "trying the alphabet."

I have since learned that when we thus "turned the Bible" we were practising theomancy,—one of the fifty-three varieties of necromantic art enumerated in an old book,—two others being pyromancy, charms through the use of fire, and botonomancy, through the use of herbs and flowers.

*Alice Morse Earle.*

### HER PORTION.

LOVE called, and, half reluctant, she put by  
 Her maiden dream, as child a broken toy,  
 And, hearkening to that far, sweet, thrilling cry,  
 Gave up her conscious, trembling self to Joy.

But Sorrow plucked her sleeve: "Let be:  
 Thou art a woman; thou art pledged to me!"

*Nora C. Franklin.*

## A GLIMPSE OF OLD PHILADELPHIA.

NEARLY one hundred and fifty years ago, certain Swedish scientists, including the famous Dr. Linnæus, proposed to send out one of their number to study the then little-known plants of North America, with the object of discovering whether many might not be naturalized in Sweden. The man chosen for this mission was Peter Kalm, "Professor of Economy in the University of Åbo in Swedish Finland, and a member of the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences."

He spent nearly three years in America, and collected much valuable information, not only on plants and animals, but also on "the civil, ecclesiastical, and commercial state of the country." Some of his observations are very curious, and the whole account of his travels, which was translated into English in 1770, throws a strong light on the changed conditions of life since he visited America. For instance, he mentions that they were becalmed on the voyage across the Atlantic, and adds (I quote from the above-mentioned translation), "as we in this situation observed a ship, which we suspected to be a Spanish privateer, our fear was very great; but we saw, some days after our arrival at Philadelphia, the same ship arrive, and heard that they, seeing us, had been under the same apprehensions with ourselves."

He congratulated himself on reaching Philadelphia in forty-one days from the time he left Gravesend, saying that in winter the passage often consumed fourteen weeks, or even more.

At that date Philadelphia was the second city in America, being larger than New York. Kalm could not obtain exact information as to its population, but believed that it very considerably exceeded ten thousand. The houses, however, had recently been counted, and numbered two thousand and seventy-six.

He seemed to be much astonished at the number of immigrants who arrived in the town. Many of them were so poor that they had not "money enough to pay their passage," which cost from six to eight pounds sterling for each person. Kalm thus describes the arrangement by which they contrived to cross the Atlantic. "They agree with the captain that they will suffer themselves to be sold for a few years on their arrival. In that case the person who buys them pays the freight for them; but frequently very old people come over who cannot pay their passage, they therefore sell their children, so that they serve both for themselves and their parents. . . . Such servants are taken preferable to all others, because they are not so dear, for to buy a negro or black slave requires too much money at once; and men and maids who get yearly wages are likewise too dear; but this kind of servants may be got for half the money, and even less."

It was said that in 1749 nearly twelve thousand Germans came to Philadelphia, many staying in the town; but it seems difficult to reconcile this statement with the estimates of the population. However, "it has not been necessary," remarks Kalm, "to force people to come to

settle here; on the contrary, foreigners of different languages have left their country, houses, and relations, and have ventured over wide and stormy seas to come hither."

The toleration shown for all forms of religion seemed to our traveller to account in a large measure for the great influx of people. "Every one who acknowledges God to be the Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of all things, and teaches or undertakes nothing against the state, or against the common peace, is at liberty to settle, stay, and carry on his trade, be his religious principles ever so strange."

At that time Germantown was quite separate from Philadelphia, and the professor records taking a ride of six English miles to visit that village, of which, he says, most of the inhabitants were manufacturers.

According to his notions, the streets of Philadelphia were fine and regular. "Some are paved," he remarks, "others are not, and it seems less necessary since the ground is sandy, and soon absorbs the wet. But in most of the streets is a pavement of flags, a fathom or more broad, laid before the houses, and posts put on the outside three or four fathoms asunder."

"The houses make a good appearance, are frequently several stories high, and built either of bricks or stone, but the former are more commonly used, since bricks are made before the town, and are well burnt." Frequently, when stone was used, it was not cut into shape, but irregular blocks of all sizes were put into the wall, and the holes between were filled up with mortar and smoothed over. "At last," says Kalm, "they draw on the outside of the wall strokes of mortar, which cross each other perpendicularly, so that it looks as if the wall consisted wholly of equal square stones, and as if the white strokes were the places where they were joined with mortar. The inside of the wall is made smooth, covered with mortar, and whitewashed. It has not been observed," he adds, "that this kind of stone attracts the moisture in a rainy or wet season."

The roofs of the houses were generally covered with shingles of white cedar, "but," observes Kalm, "many people begin to fear that these roofs will in time be looked upon as having been very detrimental to the city. For, being so very light, most people have been led to make their walls extremely thin. But at present this kind of wood is almost entirely destroyed. Whenever, therefore, these roofs decay, the people will be obliged to have recourse to the heavier materials of tiles or the like, which the walls will not be strong enough to bear. . . . Several people have already in late years begun to make roofs of tiles."

The professor gives a particular account of the twelve churches and meeting-houses which Philadelphia then possessed, and adds not a little gossip in connection with them. In his opinion, the English established church was the finest, though, he remarks, "it has a little inconsiderable steeple, in which is a bell to be rung when it is time to go to church, and on burials. It has likewise a clock that strikes the hours. . . . It has two ministers, who get the greatest part of their salary from England."

The German Lutheran church possessed a fine organ. In connec-

tion with this church Kalm mentions a Swedish minister, Mr. Dylander, who had died some years earlier. This man had been accustomed to preach on Sundays to German, Swedish, and English audiences, besides giving many addresses during the week.

Speaking of weekday services, our traveller observes that the Moravian Brethren had attempted to hold a nightly service in their meeting-house, but were obliged to discontinue it, because "some wanton young fellows" disturbed the congregation "by an instrument sounding like the note of a cuckoo, for this noise they made in a dark corner, not only at the end of every stanza, but likewise at that of every line, whilst they were singing a hymn." Surely the good brethren must in this instance have shown less than their usual determination.

"The new Presbyterian church" was founded by the New-Lights or Proselytes of Whitefield, of whom Kalm says, "his delivery, his extraordinary zeal, and other talents so well adapted to the intellects of his hearers made him so popular that he frequently . . . got from eight thousand to twenty thousand hearers in the fields," and this when Philadelphia had but ten thousand inhabitants all told! On his arrival at Boston in 1744, Whitefield is said to have "disputed with the Presbyterians so much that he almost entirely embraced them. For he was no great disputant, and could therefore easily be led by these cunning people whithersoever they would have him."

Of the German Reformed churches, New and Old, the professor has rather a scandalous story to tell. A certain clergyman, who came from Holland, "by his artful behavior so insinuated himself into the favor of the Rev. Mr. Slaughter's congregation that the latter lost almost half his audience. The two clergymen then disputed for several Sundays together about the pulpit; nay, people relate that the newcomer mounted the pulpit on a Saturday and stayed in it all night." The result of this misplaced perseverance was a riot in the congregation, and the magistrates decided the quarrel in favor of Mr. Slaughter. This unfortunate gentleman hardly got the best of it, however, for his antagonist built a church close beside his, and still continued to draw away the flock.

The English church, the New-Lights, the Quakers, and the German Reformed churches had separate burying-grounds out of the town, but the rest of the churches buried their dead in their church-yards, with the exception of the Moravians, who are said to "bury where they can." A separate burial-place was appointed for the negroes.

From the bills of mortality kept in the churches, it appeared that the most fatal diseases were "consumptions, fevers, convulsions, pleurisies, hæmorrhages, and dropsies."

Beside the long list of churches the other public buildings of Philadelphia make but a poor show. First Kalm mentions the Town Hall, which, he says, "is the greatest ornament to the town." There the deputies of the province met at least once each year "to revise the old laws and to make new ones."

"On one side of this building," he continues, "stands the library, which was first begun in the year 1742 on a publick-spirited plan formed and put in execution by the learned Mr. Franklin." "The most sub-

stantial people in town" subscribed for the purchase of books, which they were free to use, but outsiders were obliged to leave a pledge, and to "pay eightpence a week for a folio volume, sixpence for a quarto, and fourpence for all others of a smaller size." Kalm speaks gratefully, however, of the kindness of the subscribers in permitting him to make use of the books without charge. Besides the books, the library contained a few "mathematical and physical instruments," and a collection of natural curiosities; but it was only open on Saturdays from four to eight o'clock. "Several little libraries were founded in the town on the same footing or nearly with this."

Another important building was that of the Academy in the western part of the town. "It was destined," says Kalm, in a rather disparaging mood, "to be the seat of an university, or, to express myself in more exact terms, to be a college. . . . The youths here are only taught those things which they learn in our common schools, but in time such lectures are intended to be read here as are usual in real universities."

The court-house was a fine building with a bell-tower. "Below and round about this building" the market "was properly kept" at least twice every week, and oftener in summer. It began about four o'clock in the morning, and ended at nine: so the Philadelphians of that time must have been early risers.

Even in those days Philadelphia carried on "a great trade, both with the inhabitants of the country and to other parts of the world," and, though none but English ships were allowed to come into port, two hundred and seventy-three vessels arrived in 1746.

Provisions were plentiful and cheap. On his first arrival, Kalm says, "I took up my lodging with a grocer, who was a Quaker, and I met with very good honest people in this house, such as most people of this profession appeared to me." He and his servant were provided with a room, candles, beds, attendance, and three meals a day for twenty shillings a week in Pennsylvania currency. But wood, washing, and wine were to be paid for extra. The professor mentions "the good and clear water" in Philadelphia "as one of its great advantages;" "for though there are no fountains in the town, yet there is a well in every house and several in the streets, all which afford excellent water for boiling, drinking, washing, and other uses."

Fuel was expensive, though Philadelphia was surrounded with woods. "The great and high forests near the town are the property of some people of quality and fortune, who do not regard the money they could make of them," he says. "They do not fell so much as they require for their own use, and much less would they sell it to others. But they leave the trees for times to come, expecting that wood will become much more scarce." The wood brought to market was from a distance, and everybody complained "that fuel in the space of a few years was risen in price to many times as much again as it had been." This was accounted for by the fact that "the town is encreased to such a degree as to be four or six times bigger and more populous than what some old people have known it to be when they were young," by the clearing of the country round, and by the great consumption of wood in burning bricks and smelting iron ore. "For these reasons,"



Kalm quaintly adds, "it is concluded in future times that Philadelphia will be obliged to pay a great price for wood."

He says curiously little about the people of Philadelphia. He does not seem to notice any peculiarities, as one might have expected, in their dress or manners, but it is his deliberate opinion that every one "is so well secured by the laws in his person and property, and enjoys such liberties, that a citizen of Philadelphia may in a manner be said to live in his house like a king."

*Emily P. Weaver.*

### GOETHE IN PRACTICAL POLITICS.

GOETHE himself has said that the faults of great men seem exaggerated as well as their virtues; and if we apply this principle to his case, it ought to remove much of the odium which rests on his name. Some of the accusations which have been brought against him are undoubtedly just; but it is equally certain that others have originated either in party prejudice or from the jealousy of his literary contemporaries. He is certainly to blame for his desertion of Frederika, and probably for other flirtations,—though such behavior does not always seem to militate against a man's character. Goethe's love-affairs, though by no means to his credit, were of quite a different sort from the immorality of Byron, Burns, and Heine. The accusation, however, that he was a selfish aristocrat, unpatriotic, insensible to the sufferings of the poor, and opposed to the popular and reformatory movements of his time, is untrue and unjust, and can easily be proved so. That he was an aristocrat cannot be doubted; but so was Walter Scott, for they were both brought up and educated at a period when aristocracy was considered the natural order of society.

Of all classes of people, none would seem to be so unfitted—from their tenderness of feeling, their pictorial habit of mind, and their sensitive temperament—for practical politics, as poets and artists; and they have generally recognized this themselves. Emerson says,—

If I leave my study for their politique,  
Which at the best is trick,  
The angry muse puts confusion in my brain.

There is scarcely a reflection in Shakespeare of the religious and physical struggle in which he was born and brought up; and though Milton accepted a position in Cromwell's government, it proved more to his own disadvantage after the restoration of the Stuarts than for the benefit of his country. The angry muse likewise drove Dante into banishment for joining the party of the Ghibellines.

Yet there are occasions of public exigency when it is the duty of every man, whatever his calling, to devote himself unreservedly to the welfare of the state. No one was more ready than Goethe to admit

the truth of this, but the opportunity to prove his patriotism never came to him.

He was born in a community more free than any city in the United States, for there was neither state nor national authority above it; but, as often happens in small independent communities, public opinion was so tyrannical there that Goethe was glad to escape from it, even to the conventional atmosphere of the Weimar court. No person, he says, was permitted to be conspicuous in Frankfort, either for good or for evil; but Goethe could not help being conspicuous, any more than Arthur Plantagenet could help being the son of Geoffrey. At Weimar Goethe was advanced from one position in the duke's service to another, until at last he became minister of state, and was the confidential adviser of his patron all through the Napoleonic wars.

How was he to conduct himself in such a position? How do the members of presidents' cabinets conduct themselves? Are they not as reticent as possible in regard to all matters which are immediately under discussion? They give an opinion, perhaps, in order to avoid the appearance of secrecy, but they guard themselves carefully against anything which might compromise the administration. So anything which Goethe might have said, any political opinion he might have uttered, would at once be attributed to the grand duke, and pass current over the whole of Europe. Under the circumstances, he had no resource but absolute reticence; and for this plain and self-evident reason almost nothing is known of his opinions concerning the important events of his time. It is one of the most common and stupid of blunders to suppose that a silent man is an apathetic one.

Weimar is a small duchy, lying between two kingdoms; but so great is the veneration of Germans for hereditary right that its boundaries have always been respected. There was no such feeling in Napoleon's composition; he abrogated the charters of free cities, and exiled many German princes from their dominions. There was danger during his conflict with Prussia that Weimar would be forcibly annexed to one side or the other on the ground of military necessity. The only resource in such times for a state without any military force was to be as cautiously neutral as possible. That was the part which the grand duke and Goethe were obliged to act, not only for their own benefit, but for that of their people; and they would seem to have played it to perfection.

Napoleon passed through Weimar in 1806 without molesting man or property. He sent for Goethe to take dinner with him; and then for the first and only time either of them met his equal. They were more alike perhaps than is generally supposed,—one the apostle of liberalism (after a fashion) in politics, the other in intellectual life; Goethe was also a conqueror. The accusation that he behaved in a servile manner toward Napoleon is too grotesque to be considered for a moment. The emperor said to his marshals after the poet had withdrawn from the table, "There is a man for you."

Goethe possessed the rare faculty of seeing both sides of a question. It is a faculty which belongs by good right to the dramatic poet, for it is only the dramatic habit that will cultivate it. He was both liberal

and conservative. He says in one of his brief proverbial poems, "Hold fast to the old, but ever with open hand welcome the new." He has been blamed by his countrymen for his partiality toward Napoleon, which was supposed to be the result of personal admiration. There is quite as good reason for believing that he had an equal sympathy with the reforms which Napoleon enacted in Germany, Italy, and Spain. Even the socialists admit that Napoleon conferred great benefits on Western Germany. Could the impartial Goethe be oblivious to what was taking place in the states adjacent to Weimar?

Liberalism does not mean the same in Germany that it does in the United States. Its aim is not a republic, but rather a monarchical democracy like that in England. In the revolution of 1848 the German republicans were almost all socialists. In Goethe's time liberalism meant the abolition of class privileges, the right of voting taxes and armaments by elective assemblies, and freedom of the press. In 1813 many of the German liberals, like the enthusiastic Heine, took sides with Napoleon; but a larger number joined the Prussians on the ground of nationality, being desirous to free themselves from French domination. It is known that Goethe's son was at that time an ardent Napoleonist, and that Goethe himself discouraged recruiting for the Prussian army in Weimar. Surely the man who could predict an earthquake in Sicily was able to foresee the tremendous conservative reaction which would immediately follow Napoleon's downfall; but Goethe's liberalism is not a matter of inference or conjecture.

Less than one year after the battle of Waterloo, first of all the German princes, the Duke Carl August of Weimar granted his people a constitutional government which admitted freedom of the press, the right of franchise for all citizens, and the right of voting taxes. Can any one suppose this was done in opposition to Goethe's advice? We know the characters of the two men. Both were reserved; but Goethe was kindly, conciliatory, and always ready to listen to the opinions of others, while the duke was naturally haughty, self-willed, and autocratic. It is thus that Goethe represented him in the character of Thoas.

Unfortunately, the Holy Alliance set its iron jackboot on this incipient growth of liberalism, and crushed it out. Carl August was notified by the great powers that he must abandon the position he had assumed, and no choice but obedience was left him. With the spasmodic outbreaks which followed during the next ten years, in various parts of Germany, Goethe had little sympathy, for it was easy to see that they aggravated the trouble instead of helping it: he knew them to be as imprudent as they were hopeless, and when they culminated in the foolish assassination of Kotzebue (which is supposed to have prevented the adoption of a liberal constitution in Prussia) there was nothing he could do but avert his face in sorrow. Goethe always preferred temperate measures and a gradual progress in reform to sharp and violent revolutions; but if he had been a conservative in the usual meaning of the word, he would have belonged to the party of Wellington and Metternich, and would never have been reproached with

partiality for Napoleon. On the occasion of the small rebellion of the students at Jena, he said that the students were right, but that the grand duke was also right and must be obeyed.

I would compare Goethe in this respect with no less a person than President Lincoln. What do we honor Lincoln for so much as for his proclamation of freedom for the slaves? And yet the politicians who nominated him at Chicago hardly knew whether they were voting for an anti-slavery candidate or not. They knew only that they were voting for a man they could trust. Horace Greeley declined to vote for him because Lincoln had not distinctly committed himself on the slavery question. In his campaign against Douglas he opposed in a vigorous and decided manner the extension of slavery in the territories, especially when the attempt was made to force it on the people as the government was doing in Kansas; but in his Cooper Institute address he deprecated all legislation which might interfere with slavery where it was already established. Does any one doubt that Lincoln was at heart an anti-slavery man? The anti-slavery cause was part of the great humanitarian movement of the nineteenth century; and a man who was so magnanimous and compassionate as Lincoln must certainly have felt this. He believed that the cause could be promoted better by his silence than by anything he could say. He waited his time until he should be able to deal with the evil in a more effective manner than by words; and the logic of events justified him.

Such an opportunity never came to Goethe; but we read in Wilhelm Meister's Indenture of Apprenticeship, "They who see the half of a matter are apt to talk and say a great deal about it; but he who sees the whole of it feels inclined to act, and speaks late or not at all." A wise sentence, and of universal application.

Goethe did not, like Schiller, idealize the common people, but he always treated them in his writings with respect, and strove to represent the good that is in them as well as their peculiarities. There are many instances of this, but especially the scene of Easter Sunday in the first part of "Faust." "Hermann and Dorothea" is a pastoral of humble life that never has been matched. If the common people had not been interesting to Goethe he could not have written it. When a lady of rank complained that the characters in "Wilhelm Meister" did not belong to good society, Goethe replied in a verse,—

"I have sometimes been in society called good from which I could not obtain an idea for the smallest poem."

There is substantial proof in Eckermann's Conversations, and in other records, that Goethe maintained a lively interest in public affairs till the time of his death.

In the fearful cyclones on the coast of Asia which occur during the changing of the monsoons, there is a central space where the storm does not rage. So in the little duchy of Weimar, while the wars of Napoleon were raging all around, there was calmness and peace like that of the mighty intellect which has made it famous. It was the intellectual centre of Europe.

*F. P. Stearns.*

## ANSWERING HIS LETTER.

"NOW, you are sure I ought to do it?" said the Beauty.  
"Ye-es, I *think* we are sure," said the Artist, pausing in the process of retouching the face of a florid gentleman on an easel.

"Be mighty certain, now. I don't want to make any mistakes in this affair," said the Beauty.

"We wouldn't have you make any for the world," said the Writer of short stories, who was sorting over some loose sheets of manuscript.

"You both think, then, that he hasn't written again because he is waiting for an answer to his first letter, and not because he has grown indifferent?" persisted the Beauty.

"Yes," said the Artist, "I have come to believe that men need some encouraging. I used to think otherwise, but that must have been a mistake. Now, if I had met old Mr. Pettigrew's overtures half-way, I might not be at this minute engaged in touching up Colonel McVivial's nose."

"No, you might be touching up old Mr. Pettigrew's nose—with a grindstone," said the Writer. "By the way, didn't I see Mrs. McVivial here yesterday? What did she say about the portrait?"

"Thought the features were excellent, but the flesh-tints lacked color. Now, I think the——"

"We are all agreed, then, that I ought to answer the letter?" interrupted the Beauty. "Well, here goes."

She flourished her pen, but the Writer was down upon her before she could make a scratch.

"Spendthrift! Would you make your first draught on that expensive note-paper? Here, take this tablet," she said.

The Beauty bowed her graceful head over the tablet, and inscribed three words,—*"Dear Mr. Hughes."*

"There!" she exclaimed. "I've crossed the Rubicon and burned my ships behind me."

"Well! I think!" ejaculated the Youngest, shutting her algebra with a bang. "Writing letters to young men, and doesn't know any more about history than *that*!"

"History is of small importance in a crisis like this," replied the unruffled Beauty. "What must I say first?"

"Something in reference to his letter, I should think," said the Artist. "Where is it? Let me look over it again."

"Here is the precious document. Oh, what would that man think if he knew how often, how carefully, I might almost say how prayerfully, that letter has been perused? I dare say he thinks it is lying, covered up and forgotten, under a great heap of cards and notes and invitations to brilliant social functions, just as it would have been had I received it while in Chicago."

"I don't see why you wanted to fool people that way," said the Youngest.

"My dearie, you have never been tempted. Wait until Aunt Julia invites *you* to her palatial home, and see if you feel like telling everybody there that when you are in your own town you live in a ramshackle house without any paint on it, and are absolutely unknown except to a few old people who happen to remember your ancestors. Maybe you'll have the moral courage; I hope you will; but I doubt it."

"But what if he should ever come here and see how it all is?" persisted the Youngest.

"Oh, he wouldn't mind if he is in love," said the Writer.

"In love?" said the Youngest, with a sniff.

"She doesn't believe it," remarked the Beauty. "Isn't she horrid?"

"Don't squabble, children. Time is flying."

"Yes, it is now a quarter to eight, and I want to get this letter ready for the postman when he comes at two. Six hours! I'd better hurry. But what shall I say first? Oh, hand that thing here and let me read it again. Every word of it is burned into my brain, but maybe I'll get some inspiration just from holding it in my hand. Keep quiet, now."

Again she bent her head, and wrote for the space of half a minute, her three sisters almost holding their breath the while.

"Read it," they said in concert, when they saw her lay down her pen and lean back in her chair.

"DEAR MR. HUGHES,—The ambiguity of one portion of your letter left me in doubt as to whether you would expect a reply. However, you have often assured me, verbally, that a letter from me would give you the greatest pleasure. I like to give pleasure to my friends, and writing a letter is certainly an easy thing to do."

"What a whopper!" remarked the Youngest.

"Of course I mean under ordinary circumstances," retorted the Beauty, a little bit vexed. "These are altogether extraordinary, and I'm all at sea——"

"Thought you said you had burned your ships."

"Make her hush," pleaded the Beauty, trying to conceal her inward amusement under a plaintive and injured exterior. "I was going to say, when she interrupted me, that every girl ought to have some education in such matters as this. I don't see why my older sisters didn't have some love-affairs, so I could learn something by observation."

"I don't see, either," said the Artist.

"It has always been a mystery to me," added the Writer.

"Now, if you all will keep quiet just a little while, I'll go on with my writing. Carrie, hadn't you better go on to school?"

"No; it isn't time, and I want to hear that letter. 'Every girl ought to have some education in such matters.'"

Once more the central object of interest took up her pen, and this time she wrote diligently until the clock struck the half-hour, and Carrie sprang up, exclaiming, "There, now, I must go! Read what you've written, right quick."



"Not yet," said the Beauty, spreading her pretty hands over her letter. "It doesn't sound well in its present incomplete state. Wait until I've finished; or, rather, don't wait. I'll save you a copy."

"Isn't she awfully critical?" she added, when the door had closed after the reluctant departure of the Youngest.

"She's awfully smart," said the Artist. "Read what you've written. I know it's something bright, your face was so animated."

"Was it? Well, I've written my own name over two whole sheets of paper. That's all. I did it to delude the scoffer, and I half-way think she suspects the truth. I can't think of another thing to say to that man, and I'm not going to answer his old letter. I think I might do better if old Colonel McVivial didn't leer at me so. How much longer have we got to look at that disreputable old countenance?"

"If old Colonel McVivial puts a coat of paint on the front of the house, you'll be sorry you talked so ugly about him," said the Artist.

"I've heard that the old colonel is in the habit of painting things at times, but I didn't think we wanted the front of the house such a sanguinary hue," said the Beauty. "However, I suppose anything is better than bare boards. What's he going to pay you for the portrait?"

"Twenty-five."

"My! That *will* paint the front. How nice!"

"And maybe 'The Dowerless Bride' will come to your aid with something to fix up the parlor," said the Writer.

"Oh, have you finished 'The Dowerless Bride'? What are you going to send it to first?"

"I decline to answer a question which carries with it such an insinuation."

"Well, that did sound like Carrie. I beg your pardon. What are you going to send it to?"

"I haven't decided. Now, do go on with your letter. You can write as charming letters as I ever read, and there's no excuse for doing as you have done this morning."

"Don't set your lips like that. It's so unbecoming. I *am* going to write the letter. See if I don't," said the Beauty.

And she did.

"Do you really mean all that?" she asked, blushing and dimpling with pleasure, when she had listened to the praises her sisters lavished on her production.

"Every word of it," they answered, proudly.

"And can't you think of any changes that might improve it? You know he's mighty smart."

"Oh, of course you can condense and transpose a little when you make your final copy. For instance, that little witticism about Trilby, there near the last, would sound better in connection with your other remarks of a literary nature here near the first, and the part about social stagnation will just fill in where you take that out."

"Why, it's like old Mrs. Grady's quilt, isn't it?" laughed the Beauty. "'You take a corner off of the dark square, and set it onto the light square, and the piece you take off of that just fits onto the other, and nobody ever could guess how it was put together.' Now

tell me, truly, *could* you get any sense out of the old lady's description?"

"Not an atom. Go on with your letter."

It was a beautiful letter, when copied, and so impressive when signed, sealed, and directed that it moved the Artist to say the Beauty might now venture to try on Aunt Caroline's wedding paraphernalia.

"You don't mean it!" cried the delighted Beauty. "She expressly stated that we were never to remove it from the trunk until one of us had 'a prospect.' Where is the key? Oh, I hope it will fit."

It did fit, from the wreath of orange-flowers down to the dainty slippers.

"You are a dream," exclaimed the Artist.

"A poem," ejaculated the Writer.

"And wouldn't Aunt Caroline just turn over in her grave if she knew I was trying it on without even being engaged!"

"Never mind; you will be."

"Carrie doesn't think so. Wouldn't she gibe if she could see me now? Listen! isn't that the postman's whistle? He's going in at Mrs. Moon's."

"And he must have that letter, or it won't go out until to-morrow evening," cried the Artist.

"And it has been delayed too long already. Where is it?" said the Writer.

"One of you will have to take it down to him: I can't go in this rig," replied the Beauty, tilting the mirror.

"But where is it? There! I heard the gate-latch click. He's coming in here. Where did you put the letter?"

"I think you had it last," said the Beauty, dreamily, looking over her shoulder at the sweep of her white satin train, while her sisters rushed frantically from room to room, collided with each other in the door-way, and upset everything movable that came in their path. Colonel McVivial bit the dust, and "The Dowerless Bride" fluttered about in fragments.

"There's the bell! If we are not there in three seconds he'll slip the letters under the door and go on," panted the Artist, plunging about in Aunt Caroline's trunk.

"I give it up," said the Writer, ransacking the waste-basket.

"Why, here's the letter on the pincushion," said the Beauty, coming back to earth.

She flew out into the hall and down the stairs, her veil floating out behind her like a white mist, and was at the door by the time her anxious sisters could get their heads over the balusters.

"I hope she caught him," said one.

"It isn't the postman's voice," whispered the other, "and she has invited him in and shut the door."

They crept down a few steps, so they could see as well as hear.

The Beauty was laughing and blushing.

"No, you haven't interrupted a wedding," she said. "I was only masquerading, and when I heard the bell ring I thought it was the postman, and ran down to give him a letter. Here it is."

He took it and looked at the address.

"It is time you were sending it," he said, slipping it into his breast-pocket. "I have come five hundred miles to see why you waited so long, and I find you dressed as a bride."

She was looking up at him, her face as earnest now as his own. He went on,—

"Have you been deceiving me? But no, that question is not just. Have I been deceiving myself? Have the brightest dreams I ever had, the dearest plans I ever made, been all for a woman who is going to marry" (no change in the face under the crown of orange-flowers) "another man?"

Her answer was so soft and low that her sisters could not hear it, and the next instant a man's arms were crushing Aunt Caroline's satin and laces, while the Artist and the Writer crept back to the studio, where they dropped upon a couple of chairs and gazed at each other across the débris.

*Mary B. Goodwin.*

### POLITICS ON THE AMERICAN STAGE.

THE every-day citizen who attends strictly to his own business, pays his taxes before a penalty is added for delinquency, and votes the same straight ticket his father and grandfather did, although he may occasionally join in the general complaint that there is too much politics in this country, has, nevertheless, no adequate idea of the size and power of that class of men and women who make a living by saving the country. If he lives outside the large cities, in districts where it is not necessary to have a police-force, a fire-department, internal improvements, street-cars, gas, and electricity, he does not often come into contact with the "machine;" but as his place of voting becomes more and more populated, he could see, if he were observant, the "boss and gang" come more and more into power. Men with "pulls" of all kinds hang about the lobbies of all halls of legislation, from the town council chamber to that of the United States Senate, eager to curry favor for the schemes of employers who keep themselves carefully in the background. Wires are laid and pulled about as quietly as possible and as inconspicuously. In fact, politics is much like the stage: the spectator does not see what goes on behind the scenes and in the wings, nor is it intended that he should. It is a poor politician that is not actor enough to play his heroic rôles strictly according to the "Diderot Paradox," and playwright enough to make it appear that his leading juvenile is really speaking his own words.

But, without going into an exposition of the modern methods of political intrigue, the conclusion is inevitable: stage politics amounts to very, very little. It has been used to "fill in;" it is a wonderful boon to the writers of so-called farce-comedy; but as the main theme of a serious drama, it does not seem to have been given much consideration. Mr. Roland Reed's "Politician" is amusing. It is said that because of the performance he has been asked to become politician in reality. I

have heard that he founds his conception of the character on that of some demagogue who has run for almost every office—but never held one. This I can easily believe, for a more transparent schemer I never saw, and, notwithstanding the offer mentioned, the play is a farce, a good farce but for the pretence that it is not.

The heroes of Mr. Crane are not politicians; they are gentlemen of noble natures placed in what purports to be political environment. Refreshingly honest, exceptionally patriotic, they also derive much of their popularity from their amusing inability to make love. "The Governor of Kentucky," for instance, quietly submits to be chosen United States Senator, while the arrest of a forger, the defeat of a railroad swindle, and a trio of humorous but not too life-like courtships absorb his mind and the attention of the audience.

Mr. Hoyt, in his farces, often touches upon modern politics, but is careful not to go much deeper than he can be followed by the dullest spectator. In his "A Contented Woman" a wealthy resident of Denver put himself in nomination for mayor of the city, hoping that the office might be a stepping-stone to the governorship of the State and eventually to the national Senate. The worry of the campaign made him nervous, and one day when he was in a hurry to "get out with the boys" a button came off his overcoat. His wife sewed it on several inches out of place; he got angry, and said, "Damn that button!" Because he did so, the wife consented to run against him, and was elected, only to find that not being twenty-one years of age she could not take the office. The action of the play is intended as a satire on the woman in politics. "The Temperance Town," Mr. Hoyt's masterpiece, as they say, is not on the face of things a political play. It is serious, an unusual thing for Mr. Hoyt, and deals with the temperance laws of New Hampshire,—political conditions,—although no election or candidate appears. It amounts to little more or less than an attempt, a successful attempt in some ways, to throw deserved and undeserved ridicule upon the active, radical prohibitionists.

The play which perhaps more than any other deals seriously with American politics is Mr. Carleton's "Ambition," in which Mr. Nat. Goodwin pleased the New York public and made a success last season. In it the political element is almost robust enough to stand alone. The central figure is a plain, honest Senator who had worked his way up from the position of a freight train brakeman on a Western railroad. This embodiment of patriotism and incorruptibility was the leader of his party in the Senate,—somewhat paradoxical, I admit, but possible. In the midst of Cuba's struggle for freedom the Senator, Obadiah Beck, introduced a bill to recognize her and give her at least moral support. Spain, of course, disliked the measure, and her minister set up a plot to defeat its passage. Two old friends of Senator Beck, one a fellow-Senator whom he had saved from drunkenness and ruin, led the conspiracy. Upon the defeat of the bill they were to receive rich sugar lands and privileges in Cuba. By misrepresentation a quarrel was forced between Beck and the President, so that on the passage of the bill it was vetoed "before the ink was dry," but Beck, with characteristic energy, proposed its passage over the veto, and a new scheme had

to be concocted. The presidential term was drawing to a close, and the national conventions were soon to meet. The pretended friends got the Senator's reluctant consent to allow his name to go before the party for nomination. They hoped thus to divide his attention and by packing the convention to defeat not only the bill but also his nomination and ruin his power in the Senate. The plot was discovered the evening before the convention, and while Beck conferred with the plotters his friends put his bill through both houses. His name was then withdrawn from the convention, and by a most wondrous force of personal influence, without the use of money, the candidate of the plotters, the renegade Senator, was defeated, and, to prevent public exposure, compelled to resign his office, because the "American people cannot be ruled by bribery and corruption," and he had violated his trust. In the midst of all this treachery and corruption the hero makes patriotic speeches that set "the gods" to yelling and deepen the idea that the government of this country is something not to be improved upon. It sets up a condition of affairs possible only in this country, and brings all to a pleasant conclusion by methods possible only on the stage.

Melodramatic though they are, the politicians of "The Great Diamond Robbery" are life-like in their villany and trickery if in nothing else. The play, however, contains a little of everything, possible and impossible, and a review of its political phases would not be profitable. To be understood it must be seen,—twice, at least.

It can scarcely be said that there is more than one political play on the boards to-day, notwithstanding the fact that the political history of this country abounds in dramatic incident, situations, and characters. If I were asked to tell off-hand why it is so, I should say, because the American dramatist has consented to receive with blind faith the dogma that love is the central theme of the drama, and according to the spirit of the age has allowed that central theme to acquire a monopoly. The writers who know society fairly well and can picture love and the lover in all plights, romantic and ludicrous, have not, as a rule, frequent opportunities to pry into the workings of political machinery. Being able to dispose of their work as it is, they see no reason for troubling themselves about the matter. When, however, some adventurous writer does break away from conventions and traditions, "Shore Acres" or "Pudd'nhead Wilson" is the successful outcome,—hopeful signs, indeed, but surely not the culmination of the American drama.

*J. Harry Pence.*

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### LIMITATION.

O RIVER, beating 'gainst thy crags away !  
 My kin thou art in boundless aspiration :  
 Thou wouldst take mountain heights within thy sway,  
 Yet canst not rise above thy banks of clay,—  
 My kin again, in piteous limitation !

*Carrie Blake Morgan.*

## A PLEA FOR OUR GAME.

**T**HE preservation of game is the subject of deep concern to every sportsman who shoots over dogs or who trusts solely to the gun for his sport.

The rapid and alarming destruction of our game in the last few years renders it imperatively necessary for those who believe in the protection of game to take active steps in forming good game-laws and establishing game protective associations in the different States of the Union.

The game-supply of this country has steadily diminished. If it continues to do so at the same rate, year after year, it will not be long before game birds will be as scarce as the wild pigeon of to-day, and game animals as scarce as the bison, that once roamed over our Western prairies in vast numbers. It takes no prophetic eye to look into the future and see that the greed of the human race will eventually wipe from the face of the earth all our game birds and game animals.

We do not think, when we go out to enjoy a day's sport in the field, in these days of lessening numbers, that we are robbing our boys of all their game as rapidly as we can, that we are leaving for them, not the heritage of health and strength and confident manliness which comes of skill at out-door sports, but the narrow chest and white face of the counting-room.

We do not mean that our boys shall ride and shoot; we want them to add and to measure. No, we want them to grow up thin and white; and this will be the result to some, as well as the loss of many hunting days to others, if nature's own creatures are not preserved and protected.

If something is not done, in a few years from now all that will remain of our game birds will be the mounted specimens in the museums or private collections of the country. Probably our grandchildren will never be able to say that they have seen such a bird as a wild duck or snipe, outside of a collection of mounted specimens; and it is not improbable that the curators of the different museums will have to label the specimens.

Quail will still remain unexterminated, but will be found only on preserves owned and controlled by the rich, in the same manner as the English preserves are to-day. Wild fowl, snipe, grouse, and plover cannot be propagated and protected in this way, as they are migratory birds and cannot be kept within the preserves.

This is the state our game is coming to. Is it to be wondered at, when it is remembered that for four centuries, from the time Christopher Columbus landed on American soil to the present date, we have been killing and marketing game as rapidly as we knew how, and making no provision towards replacing the supply? The result of such a course is that for the most part the game has been blotted out from wide areas, and to-day, after four hundred years of wastefulness, we



are just beginning to ask one another how we may preserve the little that remains, for ourselves and our children.

From the beginning wild game has played an important part in the development of the country. It supplied sustenance when there was no other food for the farmer and settler. Buffalo and elk and deer and grouse and quail and wild fowl sustained the men who first cut into the edge of the unbroken forest of the continent, who blazed the trails westward and pushed their way, directed, like mariners at sea, by note of sun and stars across the billowing prairies. Many a halt would have been made by these advancing hosts had they been compelled to depend upon supply-trains, instead of foraging upon the abundant game resources of the country as they took possession of it.

For generations, then, it was right and proper and wise and profitable that game should be killed for food; that every edible creature clothed in feathers or in fur should be regarded as so much meat to be skilleted or potted or panned.

But times have changed. Conditions are not what they were. Game still affords food for the dwellers in the wilderness, for those who live in the outskirts; and for people in such situations venison is a cheaper commodity than beef.

But for the vast and overwhelming multitude of people of the continent, game is no longer in any sense an essential factor of the food-supply. It has become a luxury; it is so regarded, and it is sold at prices that make it such. With the exception of rabbits and hares, the supply of wild game as marketed is not such as to reduce the cost of living to persons of moderate means.

The day of wild game as an economic factor in the food-supply of the country has gone by. In these four hundred years we have so reduced the supply of game and so improved and developed the other resources of the country that we can now supply food with the plough and reaper and the cattle-ranges cheaper than it can be furnished with the rifle or the shotgun.

In short, as a civilized people we are no longer in any degree dependent for our sustenance upon the resources and the methods of primitive man. No plea of necessity, of economy, of value as food, demands the marketing of game. If every market-stall were to be swept clear of its game to-day, there would be no appreciable effect upon the food-supply of the country.

The practical annihilation of one species of large game from the continent, and the sweeping off of other species from most regions formerly populated by them, have been brought about not by the settlement of the country, but by the unrelenting pursuit for commercial purposes.

The work of the sportsman who hunts for pleasure has had an effect so trivial that, in comparison with that of the market-hunter, it need not be taken into consideration. The game paucity of to-day is due to the market-hunter, skin-hunter, and meat-hunter.

The market-hunter, the man who shoots for profit, is the great exterminator. He sends thousands upon thousands of game birds and game animals to the metropolitan markets each year, and the present

alarming decrease in the game-supply of the country is due to him ; but we cannot say to him alone, for there is a certain class of so-called sportsmen who on the whole have the right ideas about the preservation of game and about shooting, but who, when the opportunity occurs to kill a hundred or a hundred and fifty birds a day, find it impossible to stop shooting. If such men—men who are familiar with the conditions governing this subject, men who should exercise self-restraint and hold their hands because they know what this great destruction means—if such men will not live up to the principles which they profess and advocate, can we expect that those who make their living partly by the sale of game, or who know nothing about the importance of preserving game, but know only that they like to eat it, should give up the gratification of their appetites ?

We can hardly expect from others acts of self-sacrifice which we are unwilling to perform ; and until sportsmen mend their ways and cease uselessly to destroy game, their precepts cannot convert many.

Unless something is done speedily, our game in the future will be found only in the preserves owned and controlled by wealthy sportsmen.

*Fred. Chapman Mathews.*

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### THE GENTLE ART OF THE TRANSLATOR.

A TRANSLATION, so Mr. Augustine Birrell tells us, “is but the pale and smileless ghost of what was once rare and radiant.” In this remark Mr. Birrell expresses most happily, albeit with a somewhat plaintive note, the sense of blank disappointment that too often settles down upon us when we encounter, in a language not its own, the counterfeited presentment of that which once possessed the power to inspire and to charm.

Yet, notwithstanding the truth contained in the above criticism, and despite the fact that it is quite in sympathy with the feeling of those who are enabled by superior cultivation to enjoy and appreciate the peculiar graces of expression with which the language of each separate people is endowed, is it not only just that we should consider for a moment the claims of others who have lacked the time or opportunity granted to their more fortunate fellows, and who must therefore hold intercourse with the great minds of foreign nations through a translation or not at all ? Should we not give one glance at the other side of the shield, plain and unadorned as it may appear ? When rich men with private carriages at their command ride in omnibuses intended for the convenience of those of limited incomes, it is not for them to comment upon the inconvenience thereof ; and if a man who possesses the gift of tongues is content to hide his talent in a napkin and to enjoy the beauties of a foreign language through the medium of a translation, he has no right to murmur if, seen through a glass darkly, they appear to him dim, distorted, and lifeless. The more perfect the knowledge that such a man possesses of a foreign language, the more painfully will he

be affected by its disfigurement in a translation; the greater the delicacy of his critical taste, the greater will be the offence to it of that disfigurement; but just in proportion to his knowledge and his taste does he deserve to suffer. Translations are not for him or his kind.

And yet, by a touch of human nature's innate unreasonableness, these men are apt to express themselves complacently in the spirit of the remark made by Shirley Brooks to Mr. Edmund Yates, when, taking up an old school *Iliad* lying on his friend's table, he observed, "Ah, I see you have Homer's *Iliad*. Well, after all, I believe it is the best." Such people forget that this was the speech of a man of liberal education to another, who like himself was privileged to drink from the fountain-head. It is a more generous spirit that cries, with Christopher North, "Courage! all cannot read Greek, but every man has a right to as much of him [Homer] as he can get." Surely this sentiment constitutes sufficient plea to establish a right of way for those who are able to interpret the works of great minds—or even little ones, perhaps—to men and women who would otherwise be entirely cut off from their influence.

If we are justified in assuming that the world at large has need of translations, it follows that we may proceed to inquire what purpose or purposes a translation should serve. What ought to be the aim, the ideal, of the translator? The answer that naturally arises is, of course, accuracy, truth, faithfulness of reproduction; but we have here one of the cases in which a statement perfectly correct in itself is nevertheless entirely inadequate until its meaning has been extended and amplified. For there are unfortunately two kinds of accuracy, as indeed there are two kinds of most things in this world, the real and the imitation. The former of these, the genuine sincere accuracy, comes to us with the dignity and unconscious repose of one upon whom knowledge and experience have bestowed the power to control any situation with ease, and in whose presence we feel the confidence arising from the silent appreciation of power more than sufficient for the necessities of the occasion. An accuracy like this takes careful cognizance of the thought that the translation is to interpret, and then reproduces it with absolute faithfulness to the original idea, not hesitating, however, to change the outward form of expression if by so doing the soul, so to speak, of the original can be more truly interpreted.

There is also, alas, as we have said, another accuracy, an accuracy falsely so called, from which we may indeed in our necessity derive information, but which makes us sensible of a feeling akin to that we experience in conversing with one to whose knowledge we defer, but whose manners grate upon us the while from their crudity and constraint. This kind of accuracy renders literally word for word from one language into another whatever may be its appointed task, sometimes with care and faithfulness, sometimes with indifference and slovenliness, but always with the same baldness, the same jarring note.

The former of these two varieties can exist only when the translator has a very complete knowledge not only of the language from which he translates, but also, and more especially, of the one into which he renders. For, as we have already remarked, perfect interpretation

of an inward meaning can frequently be attained only by some variation of outward expression, and no one can venture to make such variations unless he has complete control over the instrument upon which they are to be made. Therefore it is peculiarly desirable that the language in which the translation assumes form should be the native tongue of the translator, for only in the language which is a man's natural endowment can he command expression sufficiently to interpret the thoughts of another without doing him the injustice of too severe verbal literalness.

The kind of accuracy which we have just spoken of as false is, nevertheless, often extremely conscientious. Its quality of falseness, while it is of course sometimes due to ignorance of the finer shades in the speech of foreign races, is yet perhaps more often the result of imperfect power of expression. The saying that a translator, like a poet, is born and not made is one that bears the stamp of truth, but the truth that it contains is the appreciation, felt even when it remains unanalyzed, that while a complete acquaintance with a foreign language can be acquired by all who make sufficient effort, perfect command of expression in a native tongue, greatly as it can be improved by cultivation, exists fundamentally as a happy gift which some of the more favored of us are born to enjoy; and only these can fitly interpret the thoughts of other minds.

If then the object of a translation is the faithful interpretation of thought with as much verbal exactness as may serve the purpose, what are the essentials of success in achieving this ideal? They are really only two,—a clear and extensive knowledge of at least one foreign language, from which the translation is to be made, and a skilful mastery of the native language in which it is to be expressed. If in addition to these there exists, as is sometimes the case, a peculiar sympathy, a subtle bond between the mind of the author and that of his interpreter, then indeed we meet with one of those rare and exquisite translations from which even scholars can derive enjoyment. But the fulfilment of the other two conditions is sufficient to give pleasure and assistance to the majority.

The objection may be raised with some show of reason that any one who possesses a command of language sufficient to meet the standard of translation that has just been set up may prefer to make use of it for the development of his own ideas rather than those of another; but indeed it often happens that the pen of a ready writer is held by one who has little or no productive power. Translation is less glorious than original work only when the original work is of the first quality; and, after all, how many of us are fitted to sit down in the highest room? A really good translation is, in spite of Mr. Birrell, an honorable and a pleasant thing: we ask only that it should have for its motto, "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life."

*Caroline W. Latimer.*

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH.

**A Romance of Old  
New York. By  
Edgar Fawcett.**

Seldom has a prize been bestowed with better judgment or greater justice than was the two-thousand-dollar *Herald* prize when given by a jury of experts to Mr. Edgar Fawcett for his delightful tale of days gone by entitled *A Romance of Old New York*. The story needs no praise of ours, nor no recommendation born of its good fortune in the *Herald* contest. It stands by itself the sweetest, purest, most charming morsel of fiction it has been our good fortune to taste in many a day.

The central figure in *A Romance of Old New York* is Aaron Burr, the brilliant though despised statesman whose glory passed under the clouds of many a suspicious deed,—from the betrayal of Blennerhassett to the duel with Hamilton,—and whom few men or women could resist when he put forth all his subtle fascinations of manner and address. Aaron Burr has scarcely a friend in the early New York to which he has returned from his long sojourn abroad. One family, however, remains loyal to him,—the Varick Verplancks; and with the aged father and the two fair daughters he often dines or lingers in talk. Charlotte is betrothed secretly, but with her father's consent, to Gerald Suydam. Pamela is critically sick and is to be sent to Throgg's Neck, the summer home of the Verplancks. But it is discovered that she also is madly in love with Suydam, and that nothing but a response from him will temper her sufferings. Charlotte and her father prevail upon the reluctant Gerald to simulate affection for Pamela, and when he becomes her accepted lover she perversely begins to recover. This makes a situation which only Colonel Burr with his tact and charm can untangle, and how nobly he does it is the theme of this clever story-teller. All turns out to the reader's most exacting taste, and one rises from the pleasant book with a far better, though perhaps unhistorical, opinion of Aaron Burr, and hence of his fellow-men.

The scenes in the old New York streets under the clipped trees and by the canal banks, in the Bowling Green, and in the suburbs are painted with quaint fidelity, and Mr. Fawcett seldom for an instant breaks through the antique atmosphere which clings to his every page. The book is a dainty example of the Lippincott press, and in type and cover is unique.

**A Marital Liability.  
By Elizabeth  
Phipps Train.**

The authoress who wrote *A Social Highwayman* has a field in fiction all to herself. Her stories have the qualities of melodramas quietly but strikingly told, and her plots are as ingenious as they are novel. The last tale by Elizabeth Phipps Train is called *A Marital Liability*, and, like *A Social Highwayman* and *The Autobiography of a Professional Beauty*, it is published by the J. B. Lippincott Company in their attractive *Lotos Library*.

It is a tale dealing, after the manner of Miss Train's earlier story, with a respectable criminal. Mr. Murray Van Vorst appears on the first pages as a convict just released from ten years' imprisonment for embezzlement. His guilt had not been fully proved, but circumstances were against him, and his wife acquiesced in his sentence. As he lurks in the warden's office hesitating to face the world anew, his daughter enters with an order for visiting an old servant of the family, also imprisoned on a shallow charge. The father shrinks from his daughter's sight, but it was inevitable that he should reveal himself, and she finds in the embittered man a subject for all her filial love. Then he is taken up by the influential Mrs. Pendexter, a young and wealthy widow, who gives a dinner to which she invites the social powers of the city in order to rehabilitate him. The true embezzler and thief is found after many ups and downs, and it proves to be a near relation to the Van Vorsts, father and daughter. How the tale ends the reader must himself investigate. Suffice it to say that he or she will not be disappointed, and that Miss Train's power of concentrated dramatic force shows no abatement in her latest volume.

**A Bachelor's Bridal.**  
By Mrs. H. Lovett  
Cameron.

The success achieved by Mrs. H. Lovett Cameron's novel called *A Bachelor's Bridal* when it appeared in LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE has induced the Lippincotts to issue it anew in the handy *Series of Select Novels*. The story is a tragic one, but is told with a picturesque force which robs it of the bitterness of tragedy. Told in brief, it runs thus:

Valentine Bryant, a practical London solicitor of forty, does not care for women, except that he has formed a comfortable intimacy with Marion Challenger, at whose husband's home he is the ever-welcome confidant. At the opening he finds himself in a lonely house at Hillside, overlooking a charming garden, having been sent for by an unknown Mr. Kirby to stay over Sunday and arrange the marriage settlements between his son and his ward. Kirby is effusive but repugnant, and states that Enid Fairfax, his ward, a great heiress, is perverse, and simply determined to marry his son James. Enid then appears, proving to be the most beautiful creature he has ever seen, but nervous and unhappy. Throughout Sunday she tries to get a private word with Bryant, but Kirby prevents it, and finally drugs Bryant's sherry, so that he leaves on Monday morning with only time to tell Enid that, if he can ever serve her, she may command him. A week later, coming to his apartments at night, he is told a lady is waiting for him, who proves to be Enid. He is horrified at having her there at that hour, and tries to get rid of her, vainly, as she knows no one in the city, and has run away from home to escape being forced into a hurried marriage with James, who is a consumptive. Indeed, if she marries before twenty-one, the guardian still controls her large fortune. Bryant leaves her in his rooms and goes elsewhere for the night, returning to breakfast with her. While he is trying to plan a feasible future for her, Kirby rushes in, accusing him of decoying Enid to London to ruin her. Bryant, finding that he cannot make Kirby believe the truth, and determined to save Enid's honor, by a sudden impulse says that she is his wife, which makes Kirby retreat in helpless rage. Bryant marries Enid and settles her in a little house in the country, while he resumes his old life, as if nothing had happened. Enid, who loves him, is



frightfully lonely, as nobody comes near her, until the appearance of a youth who has previously loved her, and then they spend every day together.

One day Bryant overhears a shocking scandal connecting a well-known young man and a beauty calling herself Mrs. Bryant. This brings to life his latent passion for Enid, and hurries the story to a close.

Mrs. Lovett Cameron has rarely given us a more interesting novel, and readers of *In a Grass Country* and *A Daughter's Heart* need have no fear of disappointment in *A Bachelor's Bridal*.

By Reef and Palm.  
By Louis Becke.  
Lotos Library.

In their shapely and pocketable *Lotos Library* the Lippincotts are introducing to stay-at-homes as well as travellers some unusually bright fiction. The last issue of this wholesome little yellow book contains Louis Becke's remarkable series of tales that weave a composite story out of many threads, called *By Reef and Palm*.

It would be difficult to single out any one or two tales for especial admiration where all are so evenly true and picturesque, but for tropic fire in landscape and human heart commend us to *The Rangers of Tia Kau* and *Challis the Doubter*. Here are the loves of the white trader and the dusky beauty of the South Seas made vivid by exquisite touches of pathos and passion, and even the tragedy is saved from horror by the firm hand of an artist of unerring taste. Herman Melville and Loti come to one's mind in reading such languorous episodes, but, with all respect for the hallowed critics of Melville and for the authority of the French Academy, we must give our preference to Louis Becke, fine, lusty, steady, human artist who knows the South Seas as we know our threshold streets. No one can possibly make a mistake in reading *By Reef and Palm*, and we predict that some day these early editions will be in request as the coveted possessions of bibliophiles.

A Deep-Water Voyage. By Paul Eve Stevenson.

A sailing voyage of thirteen thousand miles, occupying four months, is something worth recording, and when the recorder is as tactful and agreeable a writer as Mr. Paul Eve Stevenson his book becomes a source of endless pleasure to the home-keeping reader who has not the hardihood to make so bold an adventure in travel. Mr. Stevenson—and he of *Treasure Island* would have been glad to own as a connection this newer adventurer on Orient seas—and his wife took passage on the British ship *Mandalore*, commanded by an American named Captain Kingdon. They sailed away from New York with a cargo of oil, bound for Calcutta, and duly arrived at that picturesque port on the Hooghly River. Mr. Stevenson kept a journal day by day of the events on shipboard and at sea, and his eager enthusiasm, joined with a remarkable gift for narrative, has produced a tale, without plot, as fascinating as any fiction of the sea which contemporary writers are likely to provide. His gossip of the cabin where the fine old captain presided, and of the two mates Ryan and Kelly, with their characteristic habits, of the old salts, and of the monkey Pete, of the chickens and pigs, and of Captain Thompson of the whaler *Pearl Nelson*, who came aboard

and was charitably offered a draught and some novels, which he refused with pious scorn,—all this, with an infinitude more, gives one an impulse to meet the writer and so gain fuller measure even than he gives of the charm and adventure of *A Deep-Water Voyage*. The volume is a handsome product of the Lippincott press and bindery.

**Getting Gold. A Practical Treatise for Prospectors, Miners, and Students. By J. C. F. Johnson.**

The gold standard is a matter of so much moment at this point in our national history that it is essential for every one who can read to learn something for himself upon which to form a just opinion of the issues at stake. Here, then, is a shapely little volume which contains the essence of the subject of gold-mining. Everything important for a prospector, operator of a mill or mine, a director of a mining company, or a stock owner or voter to know is boiled down to its most compact statement, and all that a wide experience could give the author, Mr. J. C. F. Johnson, F.G.S., A.I.M.E., is placed at the service of his less informed fellow-craftsmen. *Getting Gold*, as the volume is well called, is the joint production of the J. B. Lippincott Company in America and Charles Griffin & Company, Limited, in London. It is amply illustrated, and, in the words of the *London Mining Journal* in regard to its author's earlier volume, "we have seldom seen a book in which so much interesting matter combined with useful information is given in so small a space."

**Frankenstein. By Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley. Illustrated.**

The very origin of Mrs. Shelley's famous romance is as fascinating as any fiction. Byron, Shelley, Dr. Polidori, and Mrs. Shelley, who was Godwin's and Mary Wollstonecraft's daughter, entered into a contest in ghost-stories. The only permanent result is this weird tale called *Frankenstein*, the forerunner of a whole shelf-full of gruesome books, few of which have lived to keep it company. *Frankenstein* holds the reader who peruses it under the electric light as it did the earlier student under the tallow dip, and it will continue to have its legions of readers for all generations to come, because it is genuine literature.

The Messrs. Lippincott now produce a really beautiful edition, embellished with engravings of places mentioned in the text, and bound with becoming taste. No library which pretends to completeness can omit *Frankenstein*.

**The British Mercantile Marine. By Edward Blackmore.**

A better condensed compendium than this neat and handy little volume called *The British Mercantile Marine* it would be impossible to find. It is one of the *Nautical Series* which the J. B. Lippincott Company, with Messrs. Griffin & Company, Limited, of London, have found entirely successful with the professional classes to which they make appeal. The present volume has been prepared by

Mr. Edward Blackmore, Master Mariner, Associate of the Institute of Naval Architects, and a member of many learned bodies in England and Scotland, as a short historical review of English shipping, including the rise and progress of British commerce, the education of the merchant officer, and the duty and discipline in the merchant service. The hand-book fulfils all that it sets out to do for the enlightenment of those whose education may be overshadowed by the very necessities of their calling, and will be found by all "who go down to the sea in ships" an interesting as well as instructive companion.

Wilt Thou Have  
This Woman? By  
J. Maclaren Cobban.

A story of many interests, which centre around one Sir William Pierrepont, head of the Pierrepont Bank, of East Dormus, England, is *Wilt Thou Have This Woman?* by J. Maclaren Cobban.

When we are first introduced to Sir William, and his brother the Squire, and the able young gentleman-farmer Coverley, they are all enjoying the prosperity natural to a comfortable country community, but ill fortune is brought upon each of them through a designing woman; in fact, *This Woman*. She is a variety actress, who had so fascinated Sir William in his youth that he had secretly married her under an assumed name, deserting the cousin to whom he was affianced. When their son was three years old the father had taken him and disappeared from the ken of the vulgar wife, providing her with an allowance of seven pounds a week, and it is only when he has become an elderly man that she spies him one night in the theatre, and sends her brother to track and blackmail him. In order to avoid open scandal, the harassed gentleman hides himself in London, leaving the bank in the care of an unscrupulous nephew, and the downfall of the whole concern is averted only by the ready aid of the cousin who loved and still loves him. Meantime, the reversals, the illness, and the love-affairs of young Coverley hold the interest of the reader, until, upon the discovery of the banker, whose presence is necessary to set all the complications straight, he finds in him his hitherto unrecognized father.

Sympathetic descriptions of the exquisite English dawns and nights form an artistic setting for the powerful incidents of the story, which appears from the Lippincott press in excellent type and an attractive binding.

Into an Unknown  
World. By John  
Strange Winter.

When John Strange Winter sets her pen at rest and tilts in the arena of fiction, she is generally crowned victor, and she has fairly surpassed herself in this last novel, called aptly *Into an Unknown World*. It is a tale describing the life of a wealthy and haughty English family, the Dundas house, which pretends to more elevation of breeding, more ancestral glory, and more exclusiveness than almost any of its equally haughty neighbors. Mrs. Dundas is a proud woman with a minimum of emotion and a maximum of insular selfishness. She is fond of society and entertains lavishly. Her family, even up to Mr. Dundas

himself, quietly acknowledge her dominance and give way to her mandates. Hence, when she and Mr. Dundas start off for a visit to a nobleman in the Thuringian forest, her two daughters apparently acquiesce in their exile to Heidelberg with a German maid. But this same Fräulein and the innocent-appearing Marjory Dundas have a secret which Mrs. Dundas, with all her keenness, has not discovered. The Fräulein is in love. Her Fritz is a musician in Heidelberg, and the two conspirators have really planned the trip which seems to be commanded by Marjory's mother. When they are well established in a pleasant flat, Fritz appears, and the Fräulein has her dreams fulfilled. But Fritz brings other callers, notably a Mr. Austin, introduced as a young merchant prince. He is an agreeable fellow, and soon falls in love with Marjory, who timidly accepts his advances, and finally accepts himself. They ran away from Heidelberg, scandalized Mrs. Dundas, and went to London, where Marjory soon enough found the family connections of her merchant prince to be hopelessly plain. In fact, they kept a shop, and the reader may imagine the situation when all this gradually dawns on the young patrician wife, and the tragic *dénouement* when it becomes known to Mrs. Dundas herself. We shall not anticipate his exhilaration over the development of such a plot, but simply point out its possibilities as a source of enjoyment. Rarely, and we say it advisedly, has John Strange Winter surpassed this novel, fresh from the Lippincott press.



"—— WHY THEN GO FAR?  
AT HOME IS WHERE TRUE BLESSINGS ARE."

**T**HERE seems to be a general awakening upon the subject of drinks. McClure's for January has a very elaborate article upon home mineral waters, and, as usual, presents many interesting facts. We are said to be about ninety per cent. water, and should feel a decided interest in the kind of water entering into our corporeal make-up. "We import waters and use them, thinking, perhaps, that they must be better because they are imported, while at our own doors, within easy reach, are the self-same beneficial and curative agents in rich copiousness."



It then proceeds to give interesting facts about the famous Londonderry (N.H.) Spring, which is working such havoc in both the foreign and the domestic water trade. A few facts, which explain why such signal success has crowned the efforts of the company owning this Spring, may not be uninteresting.

Years and years ago, fighting General John Stark, whose home, with that of "Mollie," was near the Spring, discovered that his rheumatism was benefited by the water. Later Horace Greeley, who spent a part of his youth in the old town of Londonderry, was led to look upon the water as most potent for the ills of mankind. So it comes to pass that for more than a century this water has been doing curative work, proving itself especially effective in battling against rheumatism, gout, gravel, and Bright's disease, as well as other forms of kidney difficulties. One result of this record is that a very great amount of expert interest has been aroused, and there have followed learned discussions such as very few other curative agents have succeeded in evoking. There has also flowed into the company controlling the Londonderry Springs a constant volume of personal testimonials of the greatest value and significance.

In 1887 the present owners assumed management of this Spring. It had been well known throughout New England for many years. They went to the physicians with claims, substantially, that this was the strongest and best natural lithia water. They published an analysis by the late Professor Halvorson in proof of their claim.

Soon after this, in June, 1887, Dr. A. C. Peale, in charge of the mineral water department in the United States Geological Survey, read a paper upon the classification of American Mineral Waters before the American Climatological Association in Baltimore, in which, after deprecating the habit of calling waters which showed only a trace of lithia, "lithia water," he said,—

"There is a fashion in mineral waters, as in most other things. Sulpho-carbonated waters promise to come to the front in the near future, and at the present time lithia waters occupy a prominent place.

"I know of but one lithia water, however, in which the analysis shows enough lithia proportionally to entitle it to a separate place on every scheme of classification; that one is from the Londonderry Lithia Springs, of New Hampshire."

Two years later, 1889, Prof. J. F. Babcock, Boston's foremost chemist, was invited by some physicians to visit the Springs, examine the surroundings, and report upon the probable permanency of the Springs. He wrote as follows:

"In reply to your letter of September 7th, I have to say that during the past summer I have several times visited the Londonderry Lithia Springs, and have analyzed specimens of the water. The character of the mineral formation in the neighborhood of the spa is such that I see no reason for doubting that the waters will retain their present strength and quality, notwithstanding the very large amount



which the company is bottling. This water is entitled to the confidence of the public, and especially of that class who suffer from the diseases for which it is claimed to be a specific, and it will maintain its position among the best waters of its class, both in this country and Europe."

About this time Dr. Satterlee, of New York, himself a Professor of Chemistry, published a work upon "Gout and Rheumatism," in which he gave Londonderry the compliment of a special analysis. In this book

no other American water of its kind was mentioned, while this water was specially recommended.

From that to the present time medical books, medical writers, and the most eminent clinicians, including the great Da Costa, have indorsed and prescribed the water.

The company have recently requested Professor G. Ogden Doremus to analyze the water in order to determine whether or not it still retains its old-time characteristics: "Approximately the same as shown by analysis made several years ago," says the eminent professor.

The company court the fullest investigation at all times, believing that in this way only can they retain their great popularity with physicians and the public.

As a result of the great success of this water, a lively competition has sprung up from those who either claim to have a natural lithia spring or think they know how to make one, but to our mind these companies cannot seriously affect the Londonderry Company, whose contention is that lithia and water do not make lithia water in any way resembling Londonderry, which is a distinct medicinal compound, having a definite field of action as much as opium or cinchona.

The lithia in the water, say they, does not comprise all the medicinal virtue any more than the morphia represents all that is of clinical value in opium. Hence any water which does not contain all the ingredients, compounded in the same order, something which can never be known, is not a proper substitute for this old and reliable gift of nature.

The writer has examined autograph letters from hundreds of the best known American and European physicians, and read medical books and medical journals by the hour, in which the superior qualities of this water have been set forth in a most convincing manner.

The great Da Costa has prescribed it for this, Professor Hare for that, Professor Lyman for something else. In the "new school" Professor Hale, the most widely read of all authors, "prefers Londonderry



to all other waters," and so we might go on, filling fifty pages of this publication, but enough is as good as a feast.

All the world knows what this water is doing, and no one who knows all these things is surprised at its great popularity. That jealous rivals assail it with all the venom they can command, and bring to their support retained so-called experts, is not of any moment when such an array of reputable scientific opinion is available in its defence.

To clinch the matter while we are at it, let us take the evidence of one more authority; and this may well be accepted as a summing up of the medical side of the question, so far as it relates to evidence of merit, since this journal may be regarded as voicing the opinion and experience of the profession it represents. In an editorial article the *New England Medical Monthly* took occasion to say,—

"The profession is at last awakening to a realizing sense of the value of the mineral waters of the springs of the United States. We believe we have more potent waters in America than in any other country in the world.

A notable instance is found in the Londonderry Lithia Spring Water, of Nashua, N.H.

"This water was a few years ago comparatively unknown; it is now used in thousands of cases by as many doctors."

Whatever the theory of a thing may be, a personal test and practical experience on one's self tell whether a remedy is of value or not.

During a visit to Europe in 1886, and after drinking the hard water at Brighton, the editor of the *New England Medical Monthly* was attacked with nephritic colic, and has ever since suffered from uric-acid diathesis. Hosts of remedies and many doctors were tried, and tried in vain. For two years he has drunk nearly one-half gallon of the Londonderry Lithia Spring Water each day, stopping all other treatment, and with almost entire relief. There can be no doubt that the result in his case has been little short of marvellous. He believes it is the best water in the world for this condition.

"We have found it useful, also, in a variety of other diseases, viz., rheumatism, and in all the forms of kidney diseases, especially."

Now you know the story of this particular premier, this monarch of all the table waters, that ministers to good health while it quenches thirst, that seduces the drinker into robustness while it soothes and pleases his palate, that mingles so alluringly the duty one owes to his corporeal being with the desire to attend to it, that insists upon doing good pleasantly. The whole story is told at a glance, and told more effectively than long disquisitions could tell it.

The history of a century cannot be written in a day, and so we dismiss the subject, in full confidence that we have established at least one American water upon a level with the best in the world.



COULD NOT STAND IT.—Author (describing play).—"Then, in a scene where you trample on all the ties of affection, you——"

Actor.—"Cut that out."

Author.—"What is the matter with it? It's a very strong scene."

Actor.—"I don't care. I don't propose to tramp on any ties. It's too suggestive."—*New York World*.

A LOUNGING-PLACE IN PARIS.—The people who lounge at the entrance of the Bois de Boulogne are now called the "Cercle des Pannes," *anglicé*, "The Hard-up People's Club." This gathering is supposed to be frequented by persons who cannot afford a carriage to drive to the Bois, but who yet want to see and, above all, to be seen. The accommodation consists of arm-chairs, which are paid for at the rate of four cents a sitting, and the plebeian bench, which costs nothing. Marriageable young ladies with their chaperons muster there in force on the lookout for a lord or master. Men also frequent the spot. They are of all ages, from the pert, downy-lipped adolescent fresh from college to the made-up old beau.

Every one is well dressed and impecunious, and the one sex exerts all its efforts to deceive the other. Men are looking for wives with a *dot*, and ladies are in search of husbands. Marriages which are the outcome of a first meeting at the Cercle des Pannes are not likely to be happy, and one would certainly not advise friends to go there either for a wife or a husband. But of an afternoon there is no place like it for noting the latest thing in dress, and so long as you are careful to keep clear of the matrimonial net there is no harm in frequenting that crowded corner which has been dubbed with such a funny name. —*Paris Correspondence of the San Francisco Argonaut*.

AN OVERSIGHT.—"These hotels don't seem to have any enterprise," remarked the woman who goes shopping a great deal.

"What makes you think so?"

"They don't take advantage of the example set them by the dry-goods stores. I'm sure that a hotel charging four dollars a day could get lots of women to favor it when the family goes away for the summer if they'd mark the price down to \$3.99."—*Washington Star*.

QUEER ACCIDENT TO A FREIGHT-CAR.—A very peculiar mishap to a freight-train has just come to the attention of the motive power department of the Panhandle in this city, and in its details it assumes the nature of a miracle as strange as those of old. The train was running at a rapid rate between Xenia and Trebein's, a distance of four miles, when the trucks of one of the cars gave way and jumped onto the tracks of the Cincinnati, Hamilton and Dayton road, which runs parallel with the Pennsylvania at that point. The trucks lighted squarely on the rails, and continued running until they smashed into the pilot of the Cincinnati, Hamilton and Dayton engine running in the opposite direction. The Panhandle train evidently did not suffer any inconvenience owing to the loss of trucks, as it was not discovered until Trebein's was reached, and then it was found that the body of the freight-car was held in position by the couplings and had run two miles without any wheels. The accident is perhaps without a parallel in the annals of railways.—*Columbus Press*.



It's easy  
to make  
nice Cake  
with

**CLEVELAND'S BAKING POWDER**

**POSSIBLE SOLUTION.**—"Circe," said the lecturer, "as you no doubt remember, turned men into hogs."

"I wonder if she did it by starting a street-car line?" mused the woman who had hung to a strap all the way to the hall.—*Cincinnati Enquirer*.

**A BOAT-TRAIN.**—An "amphibious boat," now in practical operation in Denmark, would seem to have paved the way for a solution of the problem involved in the operation of boats on the Upper Nile.

The idea of a boat that could be used as a carriage or run on rails over dry land was broached many years ago, but the scheme was looked upon as impracticable.

This latter-day "amphibian" is no longer an experiment. It is a commercial success, and carried during the last summer twenty thousand passengers.

This odd-looking craft is used on two large lakes situated twelve miles from Copenhagen. The bodies of water are known as Fure So and Farum So, and are divided by a narrow strip of land eleven hundred feet in width.

It is to cross this isthmus that the boat leaves the water and for the time becomes a locomotive. It is practical, although somewhat cumbersome. The inventor is a Swede, and the boat was built in Sweden. It is a small passenger steamer, forty-six feet in length, drawing from three feet to three feet six inches, according to the load. Her full complement of passengers is seventy. When loaded she weighs about fifteen tons.

Her engines and boiler are of ordinary build, and have a maximum of twenty-seven horse-power. The mechanism which propels the boat when on land is quite simple, but it may be improved upon.

The rails used are of regulation Danish pattern, and the gauge is four feet two inches.

When nearing the land the boat is guided into a funnel-shaped dock, which gradually tapers down to a width only two inches greater than that of the boat. When the narrowest portion of the dock is reached, the boat enters a short parallel dock of the same width, and is allowed to advance slowly until the front wheels touch the rails, which extend below the water-level for the purpose. Immediately the wheels are thrown into gear, and the boat begins its ascent. It is assisted by the propeller, which is in play.

In due time the back wheels find their way to the rails, and the boat advances on its upper course at the rate of about two hundred feet to the minute.—*London Mail*.

**COMPOSITE NAMES.**—Everybody knows that Delmar takes its name from the fact that it is just on the State line between Delaware and Maryland, and that Penmar is named in the same way from Pennsylvania and Maryland, but few Philadelphians are aware that their city has contributed in this fashion to the little station of Philmont, which lies about five miles beyond Jenkintown, on the New York division of the Reading Railroad. The station is very close to the line which divides the Thirty-Fifth ward of this city from Montgomery County, and is named from these two counties. The final syllable, "mont," gives the impression that the name, which is a very pretty one, is of French origin, but it is not, and probably had its origin in the brain of some railroad engineer or interested land-owner.—*Philadelphia Record*.

# The Prince of Wales

ORDERS

## Johann Hoff's Malt Extract



ABERGELDIE CASTLE, ABERDEENSHIRE.

MR. NEWMAN, Agent for Johann Hoff's Malt Extract,  
LONDON, E. C.

Please supply three dozen **HOFF'S MALT EXTRACT**, on  
account of H. R. H., Prince of Wales. J. CROSS.

By Goods Train to Abergeldie, Ballater, Aberdeenshire.

### BEWARE OF IMITATIONS

The genuine **JOHANN Hoff's Malt Extract** makes Flesh and Blood. More strength in one bottle of  
**JOHANN Hoff's Malt Extract** than in a cask of Ale, Beer, or Porter, without their intoxicating effects.

EISNER & MENDELSON CO., Sole Agents, New York.

ITS MISSION.—Bacon.—“I see they’ve put a sounding-board back of the minister’s pulpit. What do you suppose that’s for?”

Egbert.—“Why, it’s to throw out the sound.”

“Gracious! If you threw out the sound there wouldn’t be anything left in the sermon.”—*Yonkers Statesman*.

USEFUL TUBERS.—Great quantities of buttons, as well as billiard-balls, are now made from potatoes. It is not generally known that if the substance of the common potato be treated with certain acids it becomes almost as hard as stone and can be used for many purposes for which horn, ivory, and bone are now employed. This quality of the potato adapts it to button-making, and a very good grade of button is now made from the well-known tuber. The potato-button cannot be distinguished from the others save by a careful examination, and even then only by an expert, since it can be colored to suit the goods on which it is used. It is every whit as good-looking as a button of bone or ivory. The cheapness is a great recommendation, and will no doubt lead to a much larger employment in the future.

A STRONG DEFENCE.—Justice (to colored prisoner).—“You plead innocent of the charge of theft, and yet you were caught with two of Mr. Punkin-seed’s chickens in your possession. How do you explain the circumstance?”

C. P.—“De ‘cumstance is easy ‘nuff to splain, yer honor. I took de chickens by permission.”

Justice.—“How’s that? You don’t mean to say he gave them to you?”

C. P.—“Well, not ‘zackly, but sumphen ‘quivalent, yer honor. Yer see, it was dis way: I arks de gen’l’m’n to gib some ‘sistance to a po’ nigger out ob a job, an’ he say, ‘I ain’t goin’ to help any beggar, but I’s willin’ enough to help a man to help himself.’ I says, ‘Dat’s all I want, massa, a chance to help mesself.’ Well, just den he steps ‘side de barn, an’ I was left alone ‘side de chicken-coop, so I takes de fust chance he gibs me to help mesself, an’ dat’s how I comes in p’session ob de chickens. Dar wa’n’t no theft ‘bout it, yer honor.”—*Brooklyn Life*.

AN ADVENTURE.—Miss Kingsley, the African traveller, tells the following story about an adventure with a hippopotamus.

“We were going down a river in a boat,” she said, “when we saw ahead of us a herd of hippos, and I, being nervous, asked my guide if the animals were dangerous in this country.

“‘Sometimes they are, ma’am, and sometimes they’re not. You can’t tell till you’re past ‘em,’ said he.

“We went on, and just as I thought, ‘Saved!’ one came under the boat, and we were in the water. I always go conscientiously to the bottom, and when I returned to the surface I saw our crew making for the bank and heard a voice saying, ‘Do you happen to survive, ma’am?’ ‘Temporarily,’ said I. ‘Then hang on to the canoe.’ ‘I am hanging,’ said I. ‘Hang yourself.’ And he hung. I suggested the bank. ‘No,’ said he, ‘not yet. Wait till the canoe carries us past the land. If they can get a foothold, they’ll stamp you down. They can’t do much in deep water.’ But the worst of floating along like this is the chances are a crocodile will come along and sample your legs.”





MONDAY  
**SAPOLIO**  
ON THE TUBS.

TUESDAY  
**SAPOLIO**  
ON THE TINS.


WEDNESDAY  
**SAPOLIO**  
ON THE TABLES.

THURSDAY  
**SAPOLIO**  
ON THE FLOORS.

FRIDAY  
**SAPOLIO**  
ON THE PAINT.

SATURDAY  
**SAPOLIO**  
ON THE OILCLOTHS.

SUNDAY  
**SAPOLIO**  
FOR REST.



It makes everything  
shine like a 

WHO WRITES THEM.—“It beats me,” he said, as he laid down his newspaper thoughtfully. “I dunno’s I ever thought of it afore, but now thet it does come ter my mind, it certainly beats me.”

“Whut air ye talkin’ about?” asked his wife, anxiously.

“Literatoor,” he answered. “’Course we’ve seen it showed up in the newspapers time and ag’in how all an editor does is ter set down weth a pot o’ paste an’ a pair o’ scissors an’ cut out things ter put inter ’is paper.”

“Certainly. I don’t see nothin’ so beatin’ about that.”

“But this is the question: some feller hez ter git them pieces up in the fust place. It never struck me afore, but I’m blest ef I wouldn’t like ter know who the feller is thet starts in an’ gits up them there things fur the editors ter cut out.”—*Detroit Free Press.*

#### THE BUTTERFLIES.

After Coppée, “Pour la Couronne.”

At sixteen years she knew no care:

How could she, sweet and pure as light?

And there pursued her everywhere

Butterflies all white.

A lover looked. She dropped her eyes,

That glowed like pansies wet with dew.

And lo! there came from out the skies

Butterflies all blue.

Before she guessed, her heart was gone;

The tale of love was swiftly told.

And all about her wheeled and shone

Butterflies of gold.

Then he forsook her one sad morn.

She wept, and sobbed, “O love, come back!”

There only came to her forlorn

Butterflies all black.

JOHN DAVIDSON.

LAW AND JUSTICE.—The late Lord Chief Justice of England used to tell his friends this anecdote at his own expense:

Driving in his coupé toward his court one morning, an accident happened to it at Grosvenor Square. Fearing he would be belated, he called a near-by cab from the street rank and bade the Jehu drive him as rapidly as possible to the courts of justice.

“And where be they?”

“What, a London cabby, and don’t know where the law courts are at old Temple Bar?”

“Oh, the law courts, is it? But you said courts of justice.”

On his way to his judicial seat the Chief Justice saw at once that a line was drawn in the common mind between law and justice. As if, for instance, while one was dispensed, the other was dispensed with.—*Green Bag.*

# 33d Annual Statement of the TRAVELERS INSURANCE COMPANY.

Chartered 1863. (Stock.) Life and Accident Insurance.

JAMES G. BATTERSON, President.

Hartford, Conn., January 1, 1897.

**PAID-UP CAPITAL, - - \$1,000,000.00**

## ASSETS.

Real Estate.....	\$1,953,750.09
Cash on Hand and in Bank.....	1,402,133.26
Loans on Bond and Mortgage, Real Estate.....	5,377,156.02
Interest Accrued, but not Due.....	203,121.89
Loans on Collateral Security.....	714,150.00
Loans on this Company's Policies.....	936,342.31
Deferred Life Premiums.....	291,935.47
Premiums Due and Unreported on Life Policies.....	255,503.67
State, County, and Municipal Bonds.....	3,361,078.92
Railroad Stocks and Bonds.....	3,767,171.00
Bank Stocks.....	1,084,966.00
Miscellaneous Stocks and Bonds.....	1,489,370.00
<b>Total Assets.....</b>	<b>\$20,896,684.63</b>

## LIABILITIES.

Reserve, 4 per cent., Life Department.....	\$15,561,585.00
Reserve for Re-insurance, Accident Department.....	1,311,974.40
Present Value of Matured Instalment Policies.....	354,570.00
Special Reserve for Contingent Liabilities.....	286,651.98
Losses Unadjusted and not Due, and all other Liabilities.....	405,478.89
<b>Total Liabilities.....</b>	<b>\$17,920,260.27</b>
<b>Surplus to Policy-holders.....</b>	<b>\$2,976,424.36</b>

## STATISTICS TO DATE.

### Life Department.

Number Life Policies Written.....	80,479
Life Insurance in Force.....	\$88,243,267.00
New Life Insurance written in 1896.....	11,941,012.00
Insurance issued under the Annuity Plan is entered at the commuted value thereof, as required by law.	
Returned to Policy-holders in 1896.....	1,228,077.90
Returned to Policy-holders since 1864.....	11,914,765.18

### Accident Department.

Number Accident Policies Written.....	2,338,186
Number Accident Claims Paid in 1896.....	14,163
Whole Number Accident Claims Paid.....	292,379
Returned to Policy-holders in 1896.....	\$ 1,373,936.96
Returned to Policy-holders since 1864.....	19,828,189.13
Returned to Policy-holders in 1896.....	\$ 2,602,014.86
Returned to Policy-holders since 1864.....	31,742,954.31

JOHN E. MORRIS, Acting Secretary.

GEORGE ELLIS, Actuary.

EDWARD V. PRESTON, Sup't of Agencies.

J. B. LEWIS, M.D., Surgeon and Adjuster. SYLVESTER C. DUNHAM, Counsel.

**SARCASTIC.**—Barber (pausing in the mutilation).—"Will you have a close shave, sir?"

Victim (with a gasp).—"If I get out of this chair alive, I shall certainly consider it such."—*Omaha Bee*.

**OBEAH IN HAYTI.**—Say a plantation-hand has a grievance against a particular planter for discharging him without cause. He goes to an obeah man, and in a day or two the owner of the plantation walks out to his gate and finds lying in his path three white roosters' heads. He knows that they mean mischief. He knows, too, that they will not be alone, and he looks about, and soon sees an empty bottle hanging from a neighboring tree. It is a hint that the bottle is intended to catch his shadow, a serious warning that must not go unheeded. Does he send for the police? Nothing of the kind. Remember that his family have lived for generations among these obeah workers and have some fear of them. He has seen such warnings before, and knows that unless he acts quickly the consequences will be serious.

His first step is to find out whom he has offended. He remembers the incident of the man who was discharged, and sends for him. He does not know how deadly the grudge may be. His own life, the lives of all his family, may be at stake. The water-jars must be emptied and cleaned, for they may contain poison. All the food must be carefully watched by some trusty servant, but the servants are all negroes, and he does not know whom he can trust. The milk must also be watched from the moment it leaves the cows until it reaches the table. He knows himself to be in danger every moment from poison, and until he has paid off the wages due to the discharged laborer and made him a present the planter is not comfortable in his mind. He does not care to prosecute the obeah man, because it would be useless. If there are any witnesses at all, they are colored people, who are far more afraid of the obeah man than of the law, and could not be made to testify truly. Then possibly he feels a little dread of the obeah man himself, such is the force of association.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

**BOERS AND CYCLISTS.**—About three years ago a wandering cyclist threw a whole district of the Transvaal into a paroxysm of superstitious terror. Traveling by night, his advent would have been unnoticed if two young Boers, early abroad in search of bullocks, had not seen the "spoor," or track, of the wheelman. With the curiosity of their race, they followed it for some miles, being anxious to see "the man who could trundle a wheelbarrow so far without a rest."

After an hour's tracking one remarked, "This fellow must be a thief. Let us go and tell the landdrost" (magistrate). Accordingly the worthy Dutch "beak" was brought on the scene, and he was accompanied by a score of armed Boers. The whole party followed the path taken by our cyclist. Halting at noon, while the horses grazed, the mysterious trail was the object of much scrutiny. Suddenly one farmer exclaimed,—

"Look here, landdrost, if it was a barrow, where is the 'spoor' of the man who wheeled it?"

"My goodness!" exclaimed that official. "I never thought of that! Let's see—yes, here is the wheel right enough, but where is the footprint? It is, it must be—yes, yes, ride, boys, ride. It's a spook" (ghost).

To this day that portion of the road is not traversed by any of the Dutch farmers.—*Pearson's Weekly*.

MILWAUKEE BEER IS FAMOUS PABST HAS MADE IT SO



## SPRING ILLS,

Enervation,  
Fatigue,  
Thin Blood,  
Anaemia,  
Exhaustion,  
Lack of Vitality,  
Weakness,  
Nervousness,  
Sleeplessness and  
Slow Recovery from a  
Winter's Sickness  
make people feel, as is aptly said,  
"under the weather."

## Pabst Malt Extract,

The "Best" Tonic,

is a powerful vitalizing builder,  
strengthenener and sleep restorer.  
It adds energy to the heart and  
blood, fills one with life and  
brings back the fugitive health.  
It is indeed the best tonic for  
spring ills.

BOSTON  
IT A PARTY

PERFECTION IN BREWING  
IS REACHED IN AMERICA

**A NEW KIND OF HEADACHE.**—Another malady has been discovered by the faculty. It takes the form of "academy headache." This is not meant as an excuse for boys who attend seats of learning dignified with the name neglecting their lessons, but is an inconvenience which afflicts those who study high art,—not high in an æsthetic sense, but high up on the walls,—skied, in fact. The credit of diagnosing this malady is due to a Sheffield oculist.

He has discovered that when, as at the Royal Academy, it is necessary to direct the eyes considerably above the horizontal line a number of times, a great strain is thrown upon the muscles which rotate the eye upward, as well as upon the elevators of the upper eyelids, which have, of course, to be correspondingly raised to accommodate the eyeball. This being so, "it is time that those who are responsible for the distribution of the pictures in galleries should recognize the fact that the human eye is not constructed for looking upward for any length of time, and if considerations of space oblige the whole of the available wall-area to be utilized, the higher pictures should be tilted at a suitable angle in order to minimize the strain on the eye-muscles."

The people who in religious meetings and at street-corners are so fond of turning up their eyes when patronizing their Creator should take warning from this discovery, even though it does come from Sheffield, and keep their orbits either fixed horizontally or turned in a downward direction. Among ladies "academy headache" may become really useful as an excuse for light refreshment.—*London Telegraph*.

**TOO SELFISH.**—First Broker.—"Of all mean, despicable, dishonorable fellows, I think Quotem is the worst."

Second Broker.—"You don't say so! What has he done?"

First Broker.—"He made a huge sum the other day, and now he's going to retire from business and live on the money, instead of giving his old true and tried friends a fair chance of getting it away from him."—*London Fun*.

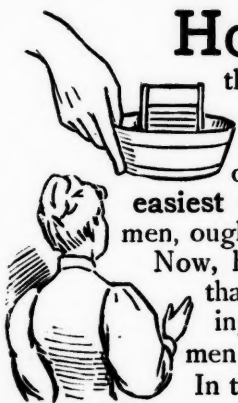
**A SMART BOY.**—The power-loom was the invention of a farmer's boy, who had never seen or heard of such a thing. He fashioned one with his penknife, and when he got it all done he showed it with great enthusiasm to his father, who at once kicked it all to pieces, saying he would have no boy about him who would spend his time on such foolish things. The boy was sent to a blacksmith to learn a trade, and his master took a lively interest in him.

He made a loom of what was left of the one his father had broken up, and showed it to his master. The blacksmith saw he had no common boy as an apprentice, and that the invention was a valuable one. He had a loom constructed under the supervision of the boy. It worked to their perfect satisfaction, and the blacksmith furnished the means to manufacture the looms, and the boy received half the profits.

In about a year the blacksmith wrote to the boy's father that he should bring with him a wealthy gentleman who was the inventor of the celebrated power-loom.

You may be able to judge of the astonishment at the old home when his son was presented to him as the inventor, who told him that the loom was the same as the model that he had kicked to pieces the previous year.—*Pearson's Weekly*.





# How did it happen

that the old-fashioned, laborious way of washing was ever given to woman as her particular work? It's an imposition on her. She ought to have had only the easiest things to do—and men, strong, healthy men, ought to have taken up this washing business.

Now, here is a suggestion. In those families that still stick to soap and make their washing needlessly hard and unpleasant, let the men do that work. They're better fitted for it.

In the families that use **Pearline** (use without soap) and make washing easy, let the women do it. They won't mind it. 517

## Millions <sup>NOW</sup> <sub>USE</sub> Pearline

### PROVIDENT LIFE AND TRUST CO. OF PHILADELPHIA.

Attention is directed to the new Instalment-Annuity Policy of the Provident, which provides a fixed income for twenty years, and for the continuance of the income to the widow for the balance of her life, if she should survive the instalment period of twenty years.

In everything which makes Life Insurance perfectly safe and moderate in cost, and in liberality to policy-holders, the Provident is unsurpassed.

**FEED THEM PROPERLY** and carefully; reduce the painfully large percentage of infant mortality. Take no chances and make no experiments in this very important matter. The Gail Borden Eagle Brand Condensed Milk has saved thousands of little lives.

**GOOD PEOPLE TO KNOW.**—Miss Kingsley, the African traveller, gives an amusing account of the beginning of her love of adventure. She was at the Canary Islands, and, hearing "very dreadful accounts of the dangers and horrors of travelling in West Africa," she felt she must go out of mere feminine curiosity. She continues, "I asked a man who knew the country what I should find most useful to take out with me, and he replied, 'An introduction to the Wesleyan mission, because they have a fine hearse and plumes at the station and would be able to give you a grand funeral.'"—*Chicago News*.

#### TO FAME.

"Bright fairy of the morn, with flowers arrayed,  
Whose beauties to the young pursuer seem  
Beyond the ecstasy of the poet's dream,  
Shall I o'ertake thee ere thy lustre fade?"

"Ripe glory of the noon, to dazzle eyes  
A pageant of delight and power and gold,  
Dissolving into mirage manifold,  
Do I o'ertake thee, or mistake my prize?"

"Dull shadow of the evening, gaunt and gray,  
At random thrown, beyond me or above,  
As cold as memory in the arms of love,  
Have I o'erta'en thee but to cast away?"

"No morn or noon or eve am I," she said,  
"But night, the depth of night behind the sun,  
By all mankind pursued, but never won,  
Until my shadow falls upon a shade."

R. D. BLACKMORE, in *New York Advertiser*.

**TOO WELL RECOMMENDED.**—Furniture-Dealer.—"This table is easily worth the extra twenty dollars. A hundred years from now it will be as good as it is to-day."

Customer (choosing the cheaper).—"In that case, I'll leave it for my great-grandchildren."

**WAS ONCE AN ATHLETE.**—"You would never think to look at me," remarked Father Hines, the Woodland prelate, as he slapped the front of his vest and surveyed an expansive girth, "that I was once an athlete. Yes, sir. It is a fact. I once performed a feat that could hardly be duplicated. I was in Virginia City during the bonanza days. A couple of men were engaged in a duel with revolvers on the main street in front of the express office. I was in the office. At the first shot broken glass fell all around me. I saw the express agent dodge behind the safe, and I thought that would be about the best place for me, but I had to climb over a partition nine feet high to reach the safe. I got there, but I never knew how. I tried to climb that partition again when the shooting was over, and I couldn't jump high enough to grasp the top of it with my hands."—*San Francisco Post*.

# Letters from the People.

"I have used your Dobbins' Floating Borax Soap for nearly a year, and would say that it is the best soap I ever used for household purposes, and I shall always take delight in recommending Dobbins' Floating Borax Soap to all my friends.

"MRS. D. W. LEVER, *Charlestown, Mass.*"

"I have used Dobbins' Electric Soap for a great many years, and always find it as represented, and have never found any other soap equal to it. I was the first person to order it of my grocer in Plantsville. One cake of your soap will go as far as three cakes of any other.

"MRS. SYLVESTER WATERMAN,  
"Plantsville, Conn."

"Some time ago my grocer asked me to try a cake of Dobbins' Floating Borax Soap, which I did, and would say that I never tried a soap that is equal to yours. It is excellent. I use it in the bath and laundry.

"MRS. A. H. BAILEY, *Boston, Mass.*"

"I have been using your most excellent soap for the last four years. I could not do my washing without it. I shall use no other as long as I can get Dobbins' Electric Soap. It prevents the hands from chapping, and does not ruin the clothes, as many other laundry soaps do.

"MRS. D. A. TOTTEN, *Elmore, Ohio.*"

"I want the privilege of testifying, for the benefit of others, that Dobbins' Floating-Borax Soap is the best soap made for household purposes. A friend of mine in St. Paul recommended it to me, and I shall always take great pleasure in recommending it to all my friends.

"MRS. ANNA SNOW, *Mariette, Minn.*"

"Ma wishes me to say that she has been using your Dobbins' Electric Soap for many years, and has recommended it to all her friends, who say that it is the only soap to use if you wish to save clothes, your back, and time.

"MISS M. BAILEY, *Chicago, Ill.*"

Ask your Grocer for **Dobbins' Electric Soap.** Thirty years' sale and reputation as the best and most economical Soap in the world.

**DOBBINS SOAP MFG. CO., PHILADELPHIA.**



**For Children While Cutting Their Teeth.**

**An Old and Well-Tried Remedy,**

**FOR OVER FIFTY YEARS.**

## MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP

has been used for over FIFTY YEARS by MILLIONS of MOTHERS for their CHILDREN WHILE TEETHING, with PERFECT SUCCESS. IT SOOTHES THE CHILD, SOFTENS the GUMS, ALLAYS all PAIN, CURES WIND COLIC, and is the best remedy for DIARRHOEA. Sold by Druggists in every part of the world. Be sure and ask for **Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup**, and take no other kind.

**TWENTY-FIVE CENTS A BOTTLE.**

**CONSUMPTION CURED.**—An old physician, retired from practice, had placed in his hands by an East India missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy for the speedy and permanent cure of Consumption, Bronchitis, Catarrh, Asthma, and all throat and lung affections, also a positive and radical cure for nervous debility and all nervous complaints. Having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, and desiring to relieve human suffering, I will send free of charge, to all who wish it, this recipe, in German, French, or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail, by addressing, with stamp, naming this magazine, W. A. NOYES, 820 Powers' Block, Rochester, New York.

THE number of prisoners locked up in fourteen of the Western and Middle States is one hundred and ten thousand five hundred and thirty-eight, and of this vast number of offenders but one-sixth know how to read.

ANCIENT EXTRAVAGANCE.—The great display of jewels by women of fashion on both sides of the ocean has been severely criticised, even by those who could well afford to wear them if they desired to. But if the precedent of history furnishes any justification for this fashion the jewel-wearers of the present day are thoroughly justified. According to Pliny, Lollia Paulina, the wife of Caligula, wore on her head, arms, neck, hands, and waist pearls and emeralds to the value of one million six hundred and eighty thousand dollars. Faustina had a ring worth two hundred thousand dollars. Domitia had one for three hundred thousand dollars, and Cæsonia had a bracelet worth four hundred thousand dollars. Seneca bewails that one pearl in each ear no longer suffices to adorn a woman; they must have three, the weight of which ought to be insupportable to them.

There were women in ancient Rome whose sole occupation was the healing of the ears of the belles who had torn or otherwise injured the lobes with the weight of their pendants. Poppæa's ear-rings were worth seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and Cæsar's wife, Calpurnia, had a pair valued at twice that sum. Marie de Médicis had a dress made for the ceremony of the baptism of her children which was trimmed with thirty-two thousand pearls and three thousand diamonds, and at the last moment she found it was so heavy she couldn't wear it and had to get another. But men led in the splendor of the Middle Ages, and Philip the Good of Burgundy often wore jewels valued at two hundred thousand dollars. When he walked along the streets, the people climbed over each other to get a look at him. The Duke of Buckingham wore a suit at the court of St. James which cost four hundred thousand dollars. The dress of the nobles during the Middle Ages was literally covered with gold and precious stones.—*San Francisco Chronicle*.

A BOY at Rockland, Maine, had been informed by his mother that a pail which stood in the sink contained microbes. A short time afterward the lad was seen fishing in the pail, presumably for microbes.

A FLOATING ISLAND.—In certain places floating islands are not uncommon, but one seen three times in 1892 in the North Atlantic Ocean was not only a rare occurrence, but was besides of peculiar scientific interest. It was first seen on July 28, in latitude 39° 31' N. and longitude 65° W. The second occasion was on August 26, in latitude 41° 49' N. and longitude 50° 39' W., and the third time was on September 19, in latitude 45° 29' N. and longitude 42° 39' W. As it was never seen after that date, it is presumed the island was destroyed in the autumnal storms.

On the three occasions the island was come upon it was moving toward the Azores at the rate of about a mile an hour. Its extent was about eight hundred feet each way, and it contained much forest growth, many of the trees thereon being fully thirty feet high. The finding of such an island in that section of the Atlantic is in itself a curious incident, but to scientists generally it is more interesting, as showing the possible migration of animals by this means, as put forth by Darwin.—*Philadelphia Ledger*.

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## AN OPEN LETTER.

921 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, March 1, 1897.

DEAR SIR:

**P**ersons who insure in this institution become members of it; in fact, **THEY** are the corporation. There is no conflict of interest; all are for each, and each is for all.

**E**very payer of a premium is entitled to vote at every annual election for the trustees by whom the company is conducted. Nothing can divest this right. That it is not very largely exercised shows unqualified approval of the management.

**N**othing is better adapted to preserve equity among the members than perfect mutuality of interest. It is the embodiment and expression of Jeffersonian democracy,—“equality before the law.”

**N**o principle of action has a wholesome utility unless practised; and the principle of mutuality would be barren unless rigorously and conscientiously applied. This Company claims to do it, and the record sustains the claim.

**M**embers assume no obligation except the payment of premium, reserving the right to stop when they choose, withdrawing such values as may have accumulated to their individual credit.

**U**sually the interest which the member bestows upon the affairs of the Company is no greater than said; but when it is once understood that an interest in promoting its business means dollars saved, you and others will probably lend a helping hand to enlarge the operations of the Company.

**T**he way to do this is, obviously, not to transform yourself into a life insurance solicitor (though there is no worthier calling when rightly pursued), but to give influential aid by endorsing your company where opportunity occurs, and by furnishing names of friends to our agents, or to this office.

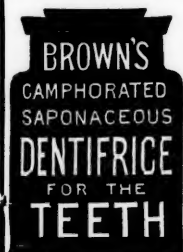
**U**nvarying as are the laws of mortality, and with interest nearly level or slightly declining, the one chance to reduce the cost of reliable life insurance is in a reduction of the expenses of management, and this may not be achieved without your aid in the directions indicated.

**A**lthough the lapses in this Company are comparatively small—less than in many companies—they are sufficient to affect the expense item. They are promoted by unscrupulous agents bent on securing a commission, regardless of the damage inflicted upon those induced to change from one company to another. Change is loss.

**L**astly, the suggestion is made that you help yourself by helping your associates. Will you do it?

Yours very truly,

**The Penn Mutual Life Insurance Company.**



**THE BEST TOILET LUXURY AS A DENTIFRICE IN THE WORLD.**

**TO CLEANSE AND WHITEN THE TEETH,**

**TO REMOVE TARTAR FROM THE TEETH,**

**TO SWEETEN THE BREATH AND PRESERVE THE TEETH,**

**TO MAKE THE GUMS HARD AND HEALTHY,**

**USE BROWN'S CAMPHORATED SAPONACEOUS DENTIFRICE.**

Price, Twenty-Five Cents a Jar.

For Sale by all Druggists.

**ABOUT PEARLINE.**—Every one knows about Pearline, almost every one uses Pearline, but we wonder if all the housekeepers who use it know half that can be done with it. We wonder if they all know what some of the bright ones have discovered, that those mountains of dish-washing—the greasy pan and kettle—may be reduced to mole-hills of the smallest size by the judicious use of Pearline. Fill the roasting pan, as soon as the gravy is poured from it, with cold water, shake in a little Pearline, and set on the stove. By the time the rest of the dishes are washed all the grease is dissolved, and the pan can be washed as easily as a plate. Treat the kettle in which anything greasy has been boiled in the same way, and beside clean utensils you will have a clean sink, the use of the Pearline rendering it safe to pour such dish-water into it. Sinks regularly treated to a bath of Pearline and scalding water will seldom need the services of a plumber.—*Watchman*, Boston, Mass., December 12, 1889.

**EGYPTIAN FORESTRY.**—Great gain has been made in forestry in the lower Nile valley in the last twenty years. This is credibly reported to have come from a memorial of an American citizen, George May Powell, to the Khedive in 1873. This memorial laid stress on the economic value of forests. This led to the issue of a sweeping edict, resulting in vast numbers of trees being planted in the Nile valley.

Mr. Powell had previously sent a similar memorial to the Turkish governor of Syria, and at the request of public men in Alexandria and Cairo he duplicated it for the Khedive. On his return to this country he organized the American and Foreign Forest Council, through which, by aid of newspapers, he has scattered millions of popular tracts on forests. This agitation and education, more probably than any other cause, is the foundation of the tide of interest on this subject which has since risen in the United States. He organized the Forest Congress at the Centennial in 1876.

This was no doubt the most influential council ever held on forestry in America. His address on "Forests and Climate," at the Pennsylvania State Fair in Philadelphia, in 1879, is a standard document.—*The Presbyterian Journal*.

A TREE very similar to the rubber and often mistaken for it is the cow-tree of Nicaragua. This yields a liquid which is very much like milk in taste and appearance and more than once has been drunk in coffee by engineers.

**THINGS WERE ALL RIGHT.**—I was sitting with a North Carolina mountaineer on his door-step after supper, when a young man of twenty came along on a mule and halted to exchange salutations.

"Say, Joe," called out my host, "how's times down yo'r way?"

"Purty fa'r, Mister Gabbitt,—purty fa'r," replied Joe. "Yo' know Dan Copperfield and Tom Bailey? Wall, Dan popped Tom over t'other day. Yes, times are purty fa'r."

"And how's the licker question?"

"Purty fa'r, Mister Gabbitt,—purty fa'r. Yo' know Bill Wheedon and ole man Bishop? Wall, they got to disputin' 'bout the licker question, and the ole man he stabbed Bill to death. Yes, the licker question is purty fa'r."

"Much doin' in politics down thar?" continued the mountaineer, as he grew more interested.

"Yes, a leetle, Mister Gabbitt,—jes' a leetle. Yo' know Dave Williams and Sam Gunn? Wall, they got to goin' it on politics, and Dave shoots Sam through the body. Mebbe he'll git well, but we dunno. Yes, suthin' doin' in politics; jes' 'nuff to keep the water hot."

"That's right. Got any religion down thar, Joe?"

"A purty considerable lot."

"And how might religion be?"

"Purty lively, Mister Gabbitt,—purty lively, considerin' the drought and the 'tater-bugs. Yo' know Si Tompkins and Abraham Skinner? Wall, they got to talkin' religion t'other day, and Si allowed that Abraham lied, and Abraham allowed that Si was a fuel, and they cut each other with knives in a right smart way. Yes, purty lively, Mr. Gabbitt,—jes' lively 'nuff to carry us through to cool weather and hev sunthin' to talk about. I allow to consider, Mister Gabbitt—I allow to consider that things down our way are movin' along purty fa'rish, and that we hain't got no cause to complain."—M. QUAD, in *Philadelphia Press*.

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